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"I am one of the Unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot get work. I want work. I DEMAND work and wages."

MY RIGHT TO WORK

FREE TRADE PROTECTION or SOCIALISM?

By R. B. Suthers

6d. net.

THE CLARION PRESS, 44, Worship Street, E.C.

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My Right to Work

BY

R. B. SUTHERS

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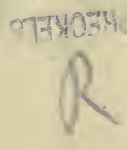

Mr. Gerald Balfour, President of the Local Government Board, speaking at a luncheon at Bradford in connection with the opening of a new workhouse hospital, corrected a misconception regarding the Unemployed Workmen's Bill. It was said that the Act was a practical admission of the principle that it was the duty of the state to provide employment for all who were able and willing to work, but who could not find employment elsewhere. He denied that absolutely.

The Act, said Balfour, was never intended to carry with it such a principle, either in the form in which it was introduced or in the form in which it was ultimately passed, and as for the principle itself, he himself repudiated it absolutely. He was perfectly convinced that any community which once admitted or adhered to such a principle would be on the road to irretrievable ruin. He himself had never believed or professed that the Act could provide a solution of what was known as the problem of unemployment.—*Daily Paper.*

TO MY
EMPLOYERS

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THE BASIS OF MY CLAIM

I AM one of the unemployed.

I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot find work.

I want work. I *demand* work—and wages.

Yes, I demand work. I do not beg for work. I demand work. I claim it as my right.

Do not, I pray you, turn away until you have heard my case. You think it impudent of me, a penniless out-of-work, to *demand* work. You think, perhaps, it would be more becoming of one in my position to beg, respectfully beg, for work. But I do not beg. I say again, I demand work, as my right. Hear my case, and judge if I make out my claim or no.

In the first place I demand work because I am a live human being, willing and able to work.

Here I am, five foot ten of bone, and muscle, and sinew, and flesh and blood. I did not ask to come. I was brought into the world without being consulted. Just as you, my fellow countrymen, were brought into the world. *I have as much right here as you have.*

Here I am. And planted within me, as in you, is the strongest of all instincts—the instinct of self-preservation. I have that instinct, and, with it, the power to satisfy it.

I have as much right to satisfy that instinct as any other human being. Can anyone deny it?

Having that instinct, how shall I satisfy it? There is only one way. All human sustenance comes from our Mother Earth. To the earth, then, I must go for my living.

But I cannot go to the earth. Barring my path on every side there is this warning: "Trespassers will be prosecuted."

If I go to the land, if I dig up even a root to appease my hunger, I am sent to prison. The land is not mine, I am told. It belongs to somebody.

I am sent to prison. I am robbed, not only of my right to work, but of my freedom, too.

Is this *right?*

Who thus steals my freedom and my natural right to satisfy the instinct of self-preservation implanted within me?

The British nation it is who does me these wrongs. My fellow countrymen.

You, my fellow countrymen, are a nation. You have a Government, and you have laws. You, my fellow countrymen, appoint this Government. You choose the men who shall make the laws, and you agree to obey the laws.

It is you, then, who rob me of my right to work and of my freedom if I exercise my natural instinct of self-preservation by taking sustenance from Mother Nature.

It is you who made the law which allows our native land to be owned by a small number of yourselves. It is you who give this small number the power to decide who shall or shall not use the land.

You are the guilty people. You rob me of life and freedom. On what grounds?

I do not deny that you have the power so to rob me. If you answer that 42,999,999 people are stronger than one man, and by reason of their superior strength have the right to rob the one of the power to exercise his natural instincts, to exclude him from the land, and to imprison him, then I have no more to say. If might is right, if the right to work and live is to be decided by force, then I am done.

But you will not, you do not, admit that force is to decide the question. If you did—what then?

If I take sustenance from the land, if I help myself to a root growing therein, you tell me I am

a thief. It is no matter that I take the root unseen by any person. If I announced to the world that I dug up roots from another man's land, you would not admit that I was entitled to the spoil under the laws of might.

No. You would denounce me as a thief. You would appeal to the *moral* law. You would imprison me all the same. You would deny the law of might.

Very well. I also appeal to the moral law.

I claim the right to work as a natural right arising out of the fact of my being, and I claim the right to work under the moral law, the law arising out of human brotherhood.

You, my countrymen, and your ancestors, have established the British nation. Every person born in these islands is a member of that nation. I, being native born, am a member of that nation.

A nation, I understand, is a number of people who agree to live together under a code of laws. It is believed that by such an arrangement life will be easier and better for all. Order and co-operation (more or less) are substituted for anarchy and competition.

Now, if such an arrangement does result in making life easier and better for all, no objection can be made to it. Order is better than anarchy.

Is life easier for all?

In this country, to-day, I assert that, far from life being easier and better for all, life is for myself, and for hundreds of thousands like me, harder and less human.

In this country, to-day, life for me, and for hundreds of thousands like me, is harder to maintain than it would be if we had our natural right of free access to our Mother Earth.

Society, nationality, civilisation, are for us a failure.

Without land we cannot live. You, my countrymen, have shut us out of the land. Under the laws made by you, we have no right to the land. You have robbed us of the right to life.

I deny your right to rob us of the right to life.

I have as much right to life as you have. The same right—no more, and no less.

Unless you admit that the question of my living is to be decided by the law of might, you have done me and many more grievous wrongs. *You have broken the moral law.*

You deny the law of might. You profess to be governed by the moral law. You profess to believe that the moral law is divine.

Whether the moral law be divine, or whether it arise from the fact of human brotherhood, in depriving us of the right to work, and live by our work, you have broken it.

What does the moral law say? Love your neighbour as yourself. Do unto others as you would be done by. Justice and Love are the moral laws.

Is it just to deprive a man of life?

Is it just to rob a man of his freedom to exercise his instinct of self-preservation? Is it neighbourly to allow your brother to starve?

The laws of the British nation, my countrymen, are supposed to be an advance on the no-laws of the savage in a wilderness. But the savage in the middle of Africa can exercise his natural instinct of self-preservation.

I cannot exercise mine. *You* deprive me of the right. The savage is better off than I am. He is free to live. I am only free to starve.

Is there not something wrong?

A Cabinet Minister has told you that for a State to admit the right to work would mean ruin.

I am ruined *now*. Thousands like me are ruined every year. Our wives and children are ruined. *Because* we have not the right to work.

Your moral law imposes on you the duty of feeding the hungry. The law of the country enacts that the destitute must be fed. The poor and the unemployed are fed now, in a way. By charity and the Poor Law.

You admit, half-heartedly, that we have a right to live.

I demand, then, the right to work for that living. I claim it as a right under the moral law.

I do not want charity. I assert that it is immoral for an able man to accept charity. Charity in such a case degrades both the giver and the taker.

Charity does not cancel your debt to me under the moral law. Charity does not provide me with the full life that I could obtain by exerting my powers. Even if I accept your charity, I am still being robbed of my just rights. I am not free.

I do not want your poor relief, with its degrading conditions. Poor relief does not cancel your debt to me under the moral law. Accepting such relief and such conditions, I am dishonouring my manhood. I am not free. I am a beggar.

I will not be a beggar. I will not accept your charity. *I demand work.*

You, my countrymen, have robbed me of the right to exercise my natural instinct of self-preservation. Your laws have robbed me of the right to work. I ask you, in the name of justice, to restore that right.

I claim the right to work. Does anyone deny the justice of my demand?

THE NATION RESPONSIBLE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot find work. Why cannot I find work?

It is too late in the day to tell me that I could find work if I wanted it. I want work. I am willing to work. Even Mr. Balfour, the late Prime Minister, admits that there are thousands in like case.

Why cannot I find work?

The land is closed against me. You, my countrymen, have made laws which allow a few individuals to "own" the land.

I suppose that you and your ancestors thought it a good thing for the nation as a whole that a few people should so own the land.

All our wealth comes from the land. If, then, you consider it a good thing that a few people should own the land, I presume you think so because work, and a living, can be obtained without each member of the nation owning a piece of land.

Shut out from the land, what means have I, a poor man, of getting work?

I must find an Employer of Labour.

Every poor man in this country is compelled, if he wishes to live, to find some person to employ him.

Now if, as I claim, I have a right to work, it follows, that having no land, I have a right to an Employer.

If, as I claim, the nation has no right to rob me of my right to work, it is the nation's duty to see that there is an Employer for me.

I admit the right of the nation to give its land into the control of a few men, or even one man.

But if in so doing the nation takes away my natural means of life, *and gives me no substitute*, then I say the nation has broken the moral law. It is not just, it is not brotherly, to me.

Has the nation provided a substitute? Is there an Employer for every man willing to work?

You know the answer to that question. There are always thousands of men and women out of work. Always. In bad times and in good times.

You smile at the idea of the unemployed going to the Employers of Labour and demanding work and wages as a *right*.

Why is it such a comic idea?

I think the idea strikes you as humorous because, my countrymen, you have forgotten your duty towards your neighbour.

You, and your ancestors, have made the laws. You have allowed a few persons to own the land. Having no right to apply my energy on the land, what substitute have you provided for me? You tell me to work for an Employer of Labour; and when I ask Employers of Labour for work, I find that you have allowed them to decide for themselves whether or not they shall employ a man.

Thus my right to work is taken from me. If an Employer of Labour does not want my labour, I must starve. Is that justice, or brotherliness? *You have taken something from me, and you have given me nothing in exchange.* You, the nation, have done this thing.

How is it no employer wants my labour? I admit the right of the nation to allow individuals to own the capital of the nation and to employ labour—that is, to organise labour for the production of wealth.

When you, my countrymen, and your ancestors permitted these conditions to grow up, I presume you did so because you thought such conditions would be good for the nation as a whole.

I am a part of the nation. If these conditions

are not good for me and for thousands more, if these conditions rob me of the right to work and live by my work, then I say the nation is breaking the moral law so long as it allows these conditions to continue.

The unemployed problem has been with us for generations. Is it not time the nation attempted to solve the problem?

It is useless to tell me that I may be out of work for a time only. That may be true. But the unemployed, more or less, are always with us.

My problem may be solved by a spell of good trade. The nation's problem is permanent. Good trade never solved the national problem of the unemployed. Good trade never will solve it. Good trade cannot solve it.

Again, what right have you, my countrymen, to condemn me to unemployment and starvation, even for a time? Is it right that a few should suffer all the misery caused by this bad system of yours?

You know that temporary unemployment often ruins a man for life. The poor have to live from hand to mouth. If there is no work, there are no wages. If there are no wages—debt. Debt hangs like a millstone round the neck of the "temporarily" unemployed.

And what of the men and women who are thrown out of work time after time? Their case is still more bitter. They are robbed of the right to live, but they are not killed as mercifully as you kill your cattle. Let Mr. Balfour speak for them.

"And then what happens? The workman first goes from a better lodging to a less good lodging, from a less good lodging to a bad lodging; then he gradually sells one piece of furniture, one article of clothing one small luxury after another; and finally, if the process be carried sufficiently far, he is reduced to the condition of a pauper, dependent upon poor relief for keeping body and soul together, and with family life shattered and broken up."

That is how you, my countrymen, treat the unfortunate man who cannot "find" work. You rob him

of the right to work, and then you slowly torture him to death.

Is it right? Is it necessary?

I maintain that it is not right. I do not think that you, my countrymen, think it is right.

Moreover, I deny that such conditions are necessary. Not only do I claim the right to work: I assert that it is possible for the nation to provide work for every willing person.

If you admit my claim to the right to work (and I do not see how you can deny it), you will agree that the right ought to be restored to me, and you will ask how it is to be restored.

I might answer that it is not my business to find a way, but yours. If you are doing a wrong to thousands of people, surely it is your duty to study how to right it. Let justice be done though the heavens fall.

There are those who say the evil must continue. That unemployment is a law of Nature. That charity is the only palliative.

I deny all these assertions. I say that if the nation is anxious to find a remedy for the unemployed problem the nation will find a way. I say it is the nation's duty to try to find a remedy, and if no better methods are suggested, I submit that the nation ought to try the remedies which I propose to describe.

EMPLOYMENT A MATTER OF CHANCE

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I cannot find work.

Why cannot I find work? How is it no Employer of Labour wants my services?

Someone said to me: "If no one will employ you, that is a proof there is no demand for your labour. The supply is greater than the demand."

I said: "Yes. What then?"

The answer was: "Well, if there is more labour than employers want, some must go without work. *Everyone has had the same chance.*"

I did not kill that poor, thoughtless fool. You will notice he did not say: "You cannot get work because you are lazy, or drunken." He knows that I, and thousands more, are steady and sober, able and willing to work.

He said there is no "demand" for my labour.

But I say there is a demand for my labour. My stomach demands my labour. My wife and children demand my labour. There is, indeed, a very urgent demand for my labour.

But no Employer demands my labour? True. Why is that?

Because no Employer can make a profit out of me. If an Employer of Labour, say a Boot Manufacturer, took me into his factory, and set me to making boots, he would have no sale for the boots I made. Why?

Because there are already enough boots being made to supply the demand. It is the same in other trades.

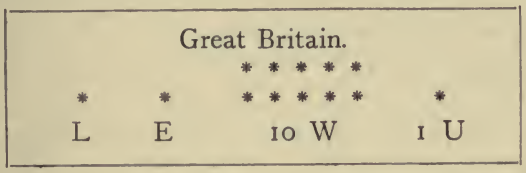
Yet I want boots, my wife and children want boots, and thousands more like me want boots.

There is a tremendous demand for boots. There is a tremendous demand for food, and coal, and clothes, and furniture. I, and thousands like me, want these things.

Why cannot we get them? Because we have no money. We have no money because we have no work. We cannot get work because there is no "demand" for our labour.

It seems a ridiculous sort of puzzle, does it not?

Here is an island, Great Britain.



On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land; one Employer, who owns all the capital; and ten Workers. There is also one man Unemployed.

The Landlord is rich, the Employer is rich, the Workers are more or less poor. The Unemployed is starving. There is no demand for his labour.

There are thousands of acres of land untilled; but the Landlord will not allow the Unemployed even to walk on his land.

The rich Employer will not employ the Unemployed. "I cannot," he says. "There is no demand for your labour. If I employ you in one of my workshops, or factories, I shall not be able to sell the goods you make. The market is glutted already. If I employ you it simply means that someone else will be thrown out of work to find you a place. I am very sorry, but it's not my fault. *Everyone has had the same chance.*"

Everyone has had the same chance? Is that true? Does everyone have the same chance of getting a living?

You know they have not. Has the son of the working man the same chance as the son of the

Prime Minister? Has the working man's son the same chance as the son of the wealthy merchant? Has the seamstress' daughter the same chance as the daughter of the duchess?

But suppose everyone had the same chance of getting work. Even then the number of unlucky ones would be no less than it is now.

When people say everyone has had the same chance, they mean that there are only so many places. They mean there is only so much work, and if you don't get work, it is nobody's fault. There is not enough work to go round.

They don't ask why there is not enough work to go round.

I am able and willing to work. I have as much right here as you have. You, my countrymen, have made the laws which shut me out from the land. You have made the laws under which work and the production of wealth are carried on.

I deny your right to leave it to chance whether or not I shall live.

If the system under which the wealth of the country is produced is a system of chance, I say it is your duty to alter it.

You have no right to force me to gamble for my life.

In so doing you have broken the moral law. You have robbed me of the natural right which the savage in Central Africa has, the right to exert my energies on the land, and you have forced me into an unequal and unfair struggle for existence.

Yes. Not only have you forced me into this desperate race for life, you have not even given me an equal chance with my richer countrymen. You have put the poor man behind scratch. You have loaded him with weights. You have scattered obstacles in his path. You have thrown dust in his eyes. You have bribed the judges.

Everyone the same chance? No. It is not true. If it were true, the system would still be rotten. It would not be a system for civilised beings, but for brute beasts.

Cannot the system be altered?

I say yes. It can be altered. A savage in Central Africa to-day is more certain of getting a living than thousands of Britons. Is this a reasonable state of things?

Consider the wealth and the power of this great nation. We are the richest nation on earth. Our wealth and our capacity for increasing that wealth advance by leaps and bounds. The labours and inventions of our forefathers have furnished us with a machinery hundreds of times more effective than the bare hands of the savage. *He can get a living.* I, and thousands like me, heirs to this great inheritance equally with you, must starve in the midst of plenty.

Is such a state of things rational? Is it just? Is it sane?

I do not think so. I think it disgraceful that with all our wealth, all our power, all our intellect, we do not organise the simple business of getting a living.

We can do it. If you admit my claim (and I do not see how you can deny it), if you admit the justice of restoring to me the right to work, you will make an effort to alter the present system.

In a civilised nation like ours, getting a living should not be a matter of chance. No willing man should lack work. A living should be as certain for him as the succession of night and day.

GOOD TRADE NO REMEDY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I cannot find work. No Employer of Labour wants my services.

Someone said to me: "Trade is bad. You'll have a chance when trade revives."

I might. I might not.

When trade is at its best, there are always a large number of unemployed.

But what right have you, my countrymen, to make my living depend on your good trade?

Food and clothes and houses and boots are obtained from the land. The land is always there, is it not? Always.

Food and clothes and houses and boots are, then always getable.

I, and thousands like me, cannot get them. You have shut us out from the land to which we have a natural right.

"Trade" is not a substitute. I cannot eat trade. I cannot clothe myself with trade. Trade does not build me a house. Trade does not make boots for me, or provide me with warmth.

People talk as if work were something over which man has no control, like rain and sunshine. Trade is good, trade is bad, they say. Bad times are coming. Good times are coming.

What makes them come? Do they come by chance?

People say, "trade's revived." They don't say who or what revived it. Can trade revive itself? Can trade depress itself?

Surely such talk is ignorant. Trade is good or trade is bad for certain reasons. Good times and bad times do not come by chance.

But whether trade be good or bad there are always a large number of unemployed. Good trade never solved the unemployed problem. Good trade never will. Good trade cannot.

People talk as if they believed that some day trade will be so good that there will be work for every willing person.

Is that possible? If it were true that more trade would solve the unemployed problem, that problem ought to be solved to-day.

Twenty years ago trade was bad. There were hundreds of thousands of unemployed.

The people of this country earned then 1,300 millions a year.

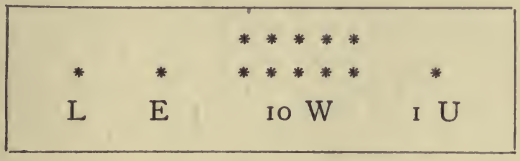
To-day they earn 1,710 millions. Trade is *so* much greater.

Is the problem of poverty abolished? Have the unemployed disappeared?

No. There are 12 millions on the verge of starvation, and there are half a million unemployed.

What do these facts show? Do they not prove that good trade is no remedy?

Here is an island, Great Britain.



On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land; one Employer, who owns all the capital; and ten Workers. There is also one man Unemployed.

The income of the Landlord and the Employer and the ten Workers, that is, the value of the wealth produced in one year, is £13,000. The one Unemployed has no share of this.

The Landlord will not allow the Unemployed even to walk on his land. The Employer will not employ him. There is no demand for his labour.

The Landlord and the Employer are famous politicians and statesmen. They make speeches to the Unemployed. They tell him that what is needed to solve his problem and find him work is more trade, new markets.

Twenty years later the income of the Landlord, the Employer, and ten Workers has increased to £17,100.

The island has prospered. Wealth has increased. The total income is nearly half as much again as before. The population is only 20 per cent. greater.

And there is still one Unemployed.

What have good trade and increased prosperity done for him? Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Good trade never did, good trade never will, good trade CANNOT *solve the unemployed problem.*

You, my countrymen, have shut me out of the land from which all wealth comes. You have provided me no other way of getting a living. All I have is a "chance," if trade improves. And it is a certainty that trade never does improve enough to employ all willing workers What have you to say to this?

Is it a reasonable state of things? Is it a moral state of things?

Just think. This is the wealthiest nation on earth. We profess to be the most civilised. And in this great country, a poor man's living depends on "chance" when trade is "good." When trade is "bad," starvation for thousands is a certainty.

If you admit my claim to the right to work (and I do not see how you can deny it), I think you will agree with me that it is time this system, or want of system, were altered.

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BAD TRADE NO EXCUSE

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I cannot find work. No Employer of Labour wants my services. They tell me trade is bad.

Trade is bad. Yes. And when trade is bad the number of men and women like me is enormous.

In the worst times there are seven times as many unemployed as in the best times.

Up and down we go, now more, now less. But *always* there are a large number of unemployed.

In April, 1899, there were 10,000 out of 500,000 of the skilled trade unionists unemployed. In December, 1904, there were 43,000 unemployed out of 573,000. (See Board of Trade Returns.)

In that month there must have been more than half a million unemployed in the whole country. Bad trade. What is bad trade? To tell me trade is bad is no answer to my demand for work.

You, my countrymen, have taken from me my natural right to earn my living out of the land. Do you think it just or honest to fob me off with "bad trade" when I ask for the means of getting a living?

We are the wealthiest nation in the world. The politicians and the newspapers are always telling me so.

They tell me that sixty years ago the annual income per head of our population was £28.

They tell me that to-day the annual income per head is about £45.

More than half as much again is earned per head, men, women, and children all included.

Is not that an astonishing fact? Yet you tell me that I am unemployed because "trade is bad!"

I think, my countrymen, this is a matter you ought to inquire into.

I claim the right to live. I have as much right here as you have. How is it I am deprived of my share in the growing wealth of the nation ?

How is it I have *no wealth at all?* How is it I have no means of producing any ?

When I inquire into the question, " Who gets the wealth produced ? " I do not find that every man, woman, and child *receives* £45 per annum.

I find that some get much more than £45, and that millions get less than £45 per *family.*

I find that 38,000,000 of our people are poor, that only 3,750,000 are well off, and that 1,250,000 are enormously rich.

The income of the whole people grows and grows. The *nation* is rich. But most of the people are poor.

Trade, then, is good on the whole. But there are always that immense number of poor. There are always the unemployed.

I submit, then, my countrymen, that bad trade is no answer to my demand for a living.

If you think it good for the nation that a few men should own all the land, if you think it good for the nation that only Employers of Labour should be allowed to organise the production of wealth, and if these laws and customs of yours deprive me of the means of earning my own living, then I contend that you owe me a share of the wealth produced by others.

You have taken from me my natural right to earn my living out of the land. Under the moral law you ought in justice to compensate me.

Can you deny the obligation ?

If your laws and customs deprive me of work, you ought to pay me for not working. That is my claim.

Do not smile. It is a common thing for a man to be compensated if his property is required by the nation.

You, the nation, have taken from me my property in my own natural powers. You forbid me to

exercise my energies on the land. You take from me all my means of life for the good of the nation. My claim to compensation is unanswerable.

You tell me it would be immoral for me to live on the labour of others?

Whose fault is that? Not mine. It is yours. The nation's.

And, my dear countrymen, there are already hundreds of thousands of rich people to-day who live on the labour of others, and produce nothing themselves. Is it moral for them?

Who grows their food. Who makes their clothes? Who builds their houses? Who gets their coal? Who provides them with books, pictures, furniture, and costly luxuries of all kinds? Not themselves.

It is the workers who provide these things.

It is you, my countrymen, who allow them to use these things. It is under your laws these things are done. You do not seem to think it immoral in their case to live on the labour of others.

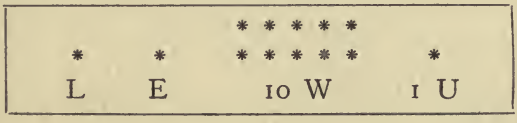
If it be moral and just to compensate a man whose land is required by the nation, if it be moral and just for rich people to live on the labour of others, how much more moral and just that you should compensate me, and the thousands like me, whose only property is our brain and muscle.

Nevertheless, I agree that it would be unwise for you to pay me for doing nothing. Idleness is good for no man.

If you admit my right to a living (and I do not see how you can deny it), and if you think I ought to do some work for that living, why not allow me to work?

The Employers of Labour do not want me. But you, the nation, are supreme. You have the power to provide work. You can become my Employer.

Here is an island, Great Britain.



On that island there are: One Landlord who owns all the land; one Employer, who owns all the capital; ten Workers, who do all the work; and one Unemployed.

The Unemployed cannot get work. There is no demand for his labour. The Landlord will not allow him even to walk on his land.

But the Landlord, the Employer, the ten Workers, and the Unemployed are a nation.

What is them to stop them as a nation from paying the Unemployed a living wage? What is there to prevent them from purchasing a piece of land for him to work on? Nothing. Nothing at all. The nation is supreme.

They owe the Unemployed a living. If his work on the land does not produce enough to keep him, that is not his fault. It is the nation's fault. The bad trade is due to their bad system.

Are not the conditions in our country similar? You, the nation, are rich. You have land and money. You owe us a living. You can afford to pay us. And there are many things that need doing.

You can, then, grant my right to work, and under the moral law, I submit that it is your duty to do so.

CHARITY NO USE

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I cannot find work. I have a right to live. I claim to have proved that. You, the nation, owe me a share of the wealth produced under your laws and customs.

But it is immoral to live without working? Granted. Then give me work.

"But if we give you work," some one said, "the only result will be to throw another man out of work."

Would that be so? Let us see.

Here is an island.

On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land; one Employer, who owns all the capital; ten Workers, and one Unemployed.

The Landlord will not allow the Unemployed on his land; the Employer cannot give him work. There is no demand for his labour.

But the Landlord and the Employer are rich. Both have more riches than they can spend on themselves. Both have more money than they can find investments for. Trade is bad.

The Unemployed asks for work. As he cannot get work, he begs for alms.

The Landlord is a tender-hearted man. The plight of the Unemployed causes him intense pain.

He will not stand by and see him starve. He gives the poor fellow a sovereign.

Does that solve the unemployed problem?

Before long the voice of the Unemployed is heard again: "I am starving."

The ten Workers do their best for him out of their little earnings, but they cannot keep the Unemployed for ever.

The Landlord gives him another sovereign.

Does that solve the unemployed problem?

After a short interval the cry of the Unemployed is raised again: "Give me work. I am starving."

The Landlord hears him. "Oh, dash it all," he says, "this is becoming chronic. Here you are, but——"

Does that solve the Unemployed problem?

No. Charity never can solve the unemployed problem. Charity never did. Charity never will. The next time the Unemployed thrust his irritating presence between the wind and his nobility, the Employer stayed the Landlord's reluctant hand and said, "Wait. Do not give the man money. Charity is a mistake. Give me the money, if you like, and I will use it to pay him for work done. I will find the work. Giving money for no work is likely to foster laziness."

The Landlord agreed. The Employer found work for the Unemployed.

"Here is a tree that the wind has blown down," he said; "chop it up into firewood."

The Unemployed set to work, and when the wood was chopped up he was told to take some to the Employer's house, and some to the Landlord's house, and the rest to the Workers. From the Workers he was to collect the usual price for firewood.

Now it was part of the work of one of the ten Workers to provide firewood for the community.

But when he came round as usual with his stock the Landlord and the Employer said, "We don't want any." And the other nine Workers said, "We have bought from the Unemployed. We had to do. We got a hint from the Boss." And the Worker

said, "This is most unjust. Who is to recompense me for my loss on this firewood? You are taking the bread out of my mouth."

And one of the other Workers said, "Charity covers a multitude of sins."

Did that solve the unemployed problem?

No, my countrymen, you cannot solve the unemployed problem by taking the bread out of one mouth and putting it into another.

If you give the unemployed a job in your garden in the winter instead of leaving the work till spring, you rob your regular man of part of his work.

If you give a shilling to one of the unemployed, and balance it by not going to the theatre, you rob a poor actor of his salary.

If you "deny" yourself of the pleasure of giving Christmas presents to your friends, and give the money to the unemployed instead, you rob the makers of those Christmas presents, and the sellers of those Christmas presents, of their wages.

It is not you who "deny" yourself, it is the Christmas present manufacturers and shopkeepers.

You cannot solve the unemployed problem by taking a living from one man and giving it to another man.

It is just the same in the case of public work.

If the Town Council decide to have the Town Hall painted in December because there are a large number of unemployed, what is the result? In April, which is the usual month for having the painting done, the painters will have so much less work. Some of them, perhaps, will not get any work.

If the Town Council decide to do some entirely new work, say the cutting of a road through one of the public parks, what effect will that have?

How will the money be raised to pay the unemployed?

If it is raised from the rates, then all the citizens will pay their share.

But most of the citizens are poor.

To make them pay an extra sum in order to find

wages for the unemployed will mean that they will have to go short of something themselves.

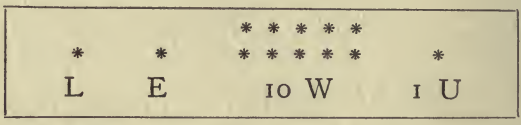
If they go short of something themselves, they will throw others out of employment.

If they buy less food, less clothes, less boots, there will not be so much work for the clothiers, the boot-makers, and the grocers and butchers.

Will that solve the unemployed problem?

No, my countrymen. These methods are no use. In trying to solve one unemployed problem in this way you create another.

Here is an island.



On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land; one Employer, who owns all the capital; ten Workers, and one Unemployed.

To find work for the Unemployed they decide to let him make a new road.

"It would only be fair," said the Landlord and the Employer, "to pay his wages out of the rates."

So they did.

And when the money was collected, the ten Workers grumbled. "Already," they said, "we were paying as much or more than we could afford. We had no margin for extra expense. Now that we have to pay this new rate, we shall be compelled to go short ourselves. There is something wrong."

Then one of the Workers had an idea. Said he: "It does not seem right that we who live hard lives, and only just make both ends meet, should be called on to pay any of the wages of the Unemployed. The Landlord, who does no work, takes heavy toll from our produce. The Employer, also, takes much more than he is worth. These two men are rich. They have large sums which they know not how to invest, for trade is bad, and there is no demand for fresh capital or new industries. Now, why should

these two not pay the whole of the Unemployed's wages out of their superfluity? All their wants are satisfied. They know not how to spend more. They would not feel a single discomfort if they paid the whole sum."

The rest of the Workers agreed, but—*they were afraid of their Landlord and Employer.*

Now, my countrymen, are not the conditions in this country somewhat similar?

Have we not a majority who cannot afford to be taxed any further in order to keep their unfortunate brethren?

Tax them, and they must go short of something to pay the tax.

If they go short, then the makers of the goods they usually buy will go short of work.

You cannot help the unemployed by cutting down the customary expenditure of the masses.

How, then, can money be found to pay wages to the unemployed?

If you want to help the unemployed without hurting those now employed, you must spend money which would not otherwise be spent.

You must go to the "savings" of the rich.

To take the savings of the poor would be criminal.

You must take the savings of the rich. You must tap those savings for which the rich can find no investment. They have all the necessaries and more of the luxuries of life than they need. They cannot spend more.

You, the nation, have the power to tax them, and find a way of spending that money.

And you have the right.

Do you say it will be unjust? I will argue the point with you.

RICH AND POOR

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I have a right to live. I claim to have proved that. You, the nation, owe me a share of the wealth produced under your laws and customs.

This nation, my countrymen, is rich enough to pay the unemployed a living wage.

But the mass of the people are poor. Therefore I say the burden of keeping the unemployed should fall on the too-full pockets of the rich.

Who says robbery?

It would not be robbery, my countrymen, but justice—a return of what, under just conditions, would never have been taken from the unemployed.

If, as I claim, all Britons have a right to live, a right to work, a right to share in the inheritance of wealth and civilisation left by our ancestors; and if, by means of unjust laws and customs, some have a greater share than is their due, while others have a less share than is their due, or none at all: then I assert that it would be right and moral to redress the balance.

I assert that it would be right for the nation to make laws which would take from those who have more than their fair share of wealth, and give to those who have less than their fair share of wealth, or none at all.

Is not that the condition of things in this country?

Is it not true that the hardest and most disagreeable work is least rewarded, and the pleasantest work most rewarded?

Someone sand: "There are plenty of your sort

to be had. That is why your wages are low. That is why your are unemployed. It is Supply and Demand. If you were clever you'd get more. There's always a demand for brains."

Neither statement is true.

The wages of my sort are low, not because we are many, but because you, the nation, have robbed us of our natural right to live on the land.

There is not always a demand for brains, and people with the best brains do not always get the best pay.

The wages of my sort are low because of Competition. Why is there Competition amongst my sort?

Because there is not enough work to go round.

Why is there not enough work to go round?

Because you, the nation, have robbed us of our natural right to live on the land.

If we had the right to go to the land for our living, there would not be competition amongst us for the jobs of the Employer. We should be independent of him. *He would have to raise our wages if he wanted us then.*

So our wages are low, not because we have no brains, but because we have no right to live. We are the victims of the nation's laws, which have given the land and the capital into the hands of a few men.

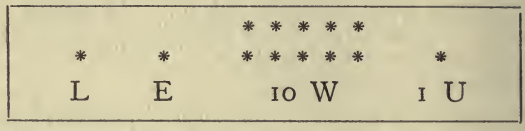
Tell me, my countrymen, does your moral law say that men must be starved or ill-paid because they are not clever?

If you employ us to do work where brains "are not required" (and where are they not required?), does your moral law enjoin you to under-pay us?

Does your moral law teach you that it is just to deprive men of work and the right to live a decent life?

No. Your moral law teaches you none of these things. Your moral law teaches you to be not only just, but generous. It teaches you to love even your enemies.

Here is an island.



On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land; one Employer, who owns all the capital; ten Workers, and one Unemployed.

One of the Workers asks the Employer for a rise of wages.

"More wages? Why? I'm paying you the market price. High profits? What's that got to do with you? If you don't like your job, go. I can get another man to take your place any day."

Yes. He can get another man any day. *There is the Unemployed.*

But suppose the land on that island belonged to the people. Suppose only a portion of it belonged to the people, and that every man had the right to cultivate a certain area for his own use.

Then the Worker who wanted the rise of wages would get it. Why? Because, having the right to a piece of land, he would be sure of a living. He need not work for the Employer unless he wanted to do. He could *demand* fair wages. There would be no Unemployed.

It is the margin of unemployed labour that causes competition amongst the workers. It is competition amongst the workers that causes low wages.

It is your laws, my countrymen, which have given the land into the hands of a few men, so causing the unemployed. It is through the competition allowed by your laws that wages are low and that riches have been heaped up in the hands of a few.

Would the employers and the capitalists be so rich if they had to pay decent wages to all workers?

You know they would not.

Would the landlords wax rich for doing nothing if the land belonged to the whole people?

They could not.

Consider the present division of the national income earned in this country by all who work.

The total amount of the incomes of the whole people is 1,710 millions.

[NOTE.—These and the following figures are taken from Mr. L. G. Chiozza-Money's *Riches and Poverty*. Other experts estimate the national income to be much higher.]

There are 250,000 persons with incomes of £700 and upwards.

This class, with their families, number 1,250,000.

They take altogether £585,000,000.

That is a tremendous slice for so few people, is it not?

There are 750,000 persons with incomes of between £160 and £700.

This class, with their families, number 3,750,000.

They take altogether £245,000,000.

Three times as many people take less than half as much as the very rich.

Still, it is a satisfying slice of the national cake, is it not?

There are 38,000,000 persons and their families who get less than £160 a year.

They take altogether £880,000,000.

THIRTY-EIGHT MILLIONS ARE POOR. Thirty-eight out of forty-three!

Is not that an amazing state of things, my countrymen? Thirty-eight millions poor, in the wealthiest country in the world. In the most civilised country in the world. In the most moral country in the world.

The Very Rich take £468 per head, the Well-to-do take £65 per head, the poor take £23 per head.

Do you call that a fair distribution of the fruits of labour?

And that is not the worst. Those figures are averages. The poorest—and they number 20,000,000—do not get more than £10 per head.

The Poor, who do all the hard, dangerous, disagreeable, and *absolutely necessary* work, get the least; while the Rich and Well-to-do, if they work at all, do the pleasant and agreeable work.

Do you tell me it would be unjust to take from those few with the enormous incomes, in order to provide wages for the unemployed?

You, the nation, are supreme. You have made the laws under which these enormous incomes are taken by the few from the national produce. You have the power and the right to alter your laws so that the distribution of incomes might be more equal. It is your duty to do so.

In the meantime, there they are. The people with all these riches cannot use them all. They supply all their needs, they have more luxuries than are good for them, and still they have huge balances at the bank which they know not how to spend. Trade is bad. There are no openings for new investments.

Here, too, are the unemployed. You, the nation, owe them a living. You have taken away their natural right to employ their energies on the land, and have given them nothing in exchange.

I say it is your duty to restore that right. Give us the right to work. Give us work. You, the nation, can find endless work, work that needs doing badly.

To take wages for the unemployed from the masses would, as I have shown, only shift the unemployed problem from one class to another.

If you want to avoid this, you must tap those savings which would not otherwise be spent. *You must tax the big incomes.* You must find some work for the unemployed which will not throw other men out of work.

It is the only just and sensible way of dealing with the matter.

And this action, my countrymen, would not solve the unemployed problem. If you found work for us all, and paid us all decent wages by taxing the rich incomes, you would not have solved the problem of unemployment. This measure would only be a palliative. To effect a cure you must alter the system. You must organise the production and the distribution of wealth, so that every person able and willing to work may earn a decent living.

TORY EXTRAVAGANCE NOT GUILTY

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I have a right to live. I claim to have proved that. What are you, the nation, going to do about it?

Have your statesmen any remedies for the great problem of unemployment? Do they recognise the justice of my claim to work and wages?

So far as I know, not one of them admits "the right to work." Not one of them has a remedy for unemployment.

Mr. Balfour asserts that nothing can be done.

Mr. John Morley says he knows of no remedy.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman says he has no remedy, but he thinks "experiments" might be made in the direction of farm colonies.

Lord Rosebery has no remedy.

Mr. Chamberlain has no remedy, but he promises "more employment" if the nation goes in for Protection.

Practically, the only remedies for unemployment offered by our statesmen are Protection on the one side, and Free Trade on the other.

The Liberal Free Traders tell us that unemployment is due to the extravagance of the Tory Government.

They tell us that unemployment is due to the Boer War.

The Liberal Free Traders tell us the Tory Government increased the taxes by forty or fifty millions during their term of office, *therefore* trade is bad, and there is unemployment.

They tell us that the country spent £250,000,000

on the Boer War, *therefore* trade is bad and there is unemployment.

But the Tory Free Traders don't say these things.

Let me give you a typical extract from a typical speech by a typical Liberal Free Trader—Mr. Lloyd George.

He said, at Bangor: "Why do you have this depression? I will tell you. You can't spend £250,000,000 on gunpowder and not pay for it. . . . No great industrial concerns are being floated, no additional capital is being required in order to develop concerns already going. Where has the money gone? Gone in lyddite shells, in burning homes in Africa, in blackening the veldt, in slaughtering children. Do you really think that things like this can be done and someone not pay? That's why unemployment has come."

That's why unemployment has come. Is it?

Now, my countrymen, I don't think anyone can misunderstand this argument of the Liberal Free Traders. They mean to say that the unemployed problem is due (1) to the expenditure on the Boer War; (2) to the additional taxation imposed by the Tory Government during the last ten years.

Is this argument sound?

If the argument is sound, ought we not to find that *before* the Boer War and *before* the time of the last Tory Government, there was no unemployment?

If war and Tory extravagance are the only causes of unemployment, we ought to find that when there was an economical and peaceful Government in power the unemployed problem did not exist.

What are the facts?

A Liberal Free Trade Government was in office from 1892-1895.

There was no huge expenditure on war during their term. Consequently there was no call on the capital which would ordinarily go into trade.

The Government was not an extravagant Government. At least, they say not.

When the Liberal Government went out of office in 1895 the taxes were £78,000,000.

When the Tory Government went out of office in 1905 the taxes were £120,000,000.

Thus the Tories put on more than 50 per cent. in taxes, and they took £250,000,000 out of the national pocket to spend on war.

"No wonder," say the Liberal Free Traders, "that trade is bad."

Was trade good under the Liberal Government? Was there no unemployed problem in 1892-1895?

Let us turn to the Board of Trade statistics of the number of members out of work in the trade unions which make returns.

The Liberals came into office in 1892. In January of that year the number out of work was 5 per cent. In December the number out of work was 10·2 per cent.

So that unemployment was twice as bad at the end of the year as at the beginning.

If Free Trade and Economical Government are the remedies for unemployment, why was there so much unemployment in 1892?

Will Mr. Lloyd George and the other Liberal Free Trade statesmen kindly explain?

Trade and employment rapidly grew worse after the Liberals came into power in 1892.

What was the cause?

It was not war, it was not Tory extravagance.

What was the cause?

During the whole term of this Liberal, Free Trade, Economical, Peaceful Government, trade was bad, unemployment was terrible.

It has never been so bad since.

There has never been 10 per cent. of the trade unionists out of work since 1893. There have been more men out of work, but never the same proportion of the total number of workers.

The high-water mark in 1904 was 7·6 per cent. That was under the Tory Government.

Immediately the Tory Government came into power in 1895 trade rapidly improved, and in December, 1896, the unemployed were only 3 per cent.

In 1899, the first year of the war, the unemployed were only 2·5 per cent.

In December, 1902, when the war was over, the unemployed were 5·5 per cent., or about the same proportion as when the Liberals took office in 1892.

Since 1902 the percentage of unemployed has increased, but it has never reached 10 per cent., as it did under the Free Trade, Economical, Peaceful, Liberal Government of 1892-1895.

Here are the percentages of unemployed in the December of each year during the lives of both Governments:

LIBERAL.

1892	10·2
1893	7·9
1894	7·7
Average	8·6

TORY.

1895	4·8	1900	4·0
1896	3·2	1901	4·6
1897	5·3	1902	5·5
1898	2·9	1903	6·7
1899	2·5	1904	7·6
Average	4·7		

These figures show that the average percentage of unemployment in the trade unions making returns was 8·6 under the Economical, Peaceful, Liberal Free Traders, and only 4·7 under the Extravagant, War-making Tories.

Now, my countrymen, I don't want to argue that Tory Governments *cause* good trade and Liberal Governments bad trade.

But I wish to point out to you that the facts and figures quoted *prove* that the Liberal Free Traders are talking nonsense when they tell the people that the Boer War and the increase in taxation are *the causes* of unemployment.

There is unemployment *whatever* Government is in power, and no Government has yet attempted to grapple with the problem.

Mr. Balfour, for the late Tory Government, said he knew of no remedy.

The Liberal leaders say they know of no remedy; but some of them say right out, or insinuate, that there would be no unemployment but for Tory extravagance.

These statements are not true.

At the beginning of 1887 *there were* 10·3 *per cent. unemployed.* That was at the end of a course of Free Trade, Economical, Peaceful Liberal Government.

What do these facts prove? Is it not plain that unemployment is due to some other cause than Tory extravagance and war expenditure?

When the Free Traders tell us that unemployment is due to heavy taxation, I say they are talking nonsense.

Let the Free Traders take off every penny of the taxes, and I say there will be an unemployed problem just the same as to-day.

Free Trade is no remedy for unemployment. We have had Free Trade for sixty years, and we have had every few years the same intense suffering from unemployment.

Whatever Government is in power, Liberal or Tory, bad trade comes almost as regularly as Christmas.

What is the cause? Of the causes of unemployment I have already told you something. What is the remedy?

Well, my countrymen, I do not think Free Trade is going to solve the problem. I will tell you why.

FISCAL FAILURES REJECTED

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I have a right to live. I claim to have proved that.

Liberal Free Trade statesmen tell me that unemployment is due to Tory extravagance and war expenditure.

But I think I have proved that this statement is not true. There is *always* unemployment.

Liberal Free Traders have been telling the working classes for years that the remedy for unemployment is "new markets." That was when they were in power.

"The reason you are unemployed," they said, "is the lack of markets." We capitalists cannot employ you to make things unless we can sell them. But we have supplied the demand. What are we to do? We must have more markets."

What they meant was more "foreign markets." They never troubled about making a home market big enough to employ all the people.

"To capture the new markets," they used to tell the workers, "it will be necessary for you to work for very low wages, because we have such keen competitors, who are after the same markets."

This game went on for years. We got new markets, and are still getting them. We added millions of square miles and millions of people to the Empire.

Did the new markets solve the unemployed problem?

No, and new markets never will do.

The Protectionists tell us now that unemployment is caused by the tariff walls of foreign countries.

They tell us that we can't get into foreign markets because of these tariff walls. We cannot sell our goods *there* because of the taxes, but we allow the foreigners to come into *our* market free. They come and sell their goods, and thereby displace British labour.

The Free Trade answer is: "Look how enormously wealthy we have become under Free Trade. Look at our growing imports and exports. Look at our cheap food. Be faithful to Free Trade, and all will be well—some day."

Some day. Some day, if we close our eyes and open our mouths, something may fall into them.

But we have tried Free Trade for sixty years, and as a remedy for bad trade and unemployment it has proved an absolute failure.

We, the nation, have become enormously wealthy. *We*, the nation, have built up a splendid, profitable, foreign trade. *We*, the nation, have prospered exceedingly under Free Trade principles.

WE.

Who are we?

I, and millions like me, are not part of the "we." Who are the "we" who own this enormous wealth?

Well, I have already told you how the national cake is divided. A few are very rich, a few are comfortably off, and 38 millions of our people are poor.

Is that a state of things to boast about? Is the system which produces it a system to go into ecstasies about?

I think not. I, and thousands like me, refuse any longer to believe that Free Trade and devil-take-the hindmost are the principles by which human society should try to live.

We refuse any longer to believe that Free Trade will some day provide work and wages for all.

We know it will not. We know it cannot.

The Free Traders claim that under this system the whole nation is richer than it would be under a system of Protection.

But what is that to me and the thousands like me?

We are out of work. When we are in work 38 millions of us are poor. Many of us could not be worse off under any system. Why, then, should we believe in the Free Trade remedy?

We know that the nation has got richer and richer and richer during the sixty years of Free Trade. And we know that Germany, and France, and the United States have got richer and richer and richer under Protection.

We know also that in all these countries—in France, in Germany, in the United States, and in Great Britain—there are always a large number of unemployed, and an enormous number of poor people.

Free Trade or Protection—it is all one. *There are always the unemployed.*

That is a fact which you, my countrymen, would do well to ponder.

I claim the right to live. To live I must work. I have the right to work. You, the nation, have taken that right from me.

Will more Free Trade or will Protection restore that right to me?

Neither one nor the other.

Free Trade cannot. Protection cannot.

What is the issue between Free Trade and Protection?

The Free Traders claim that under their system the nation will be richer. The Protectionists claim that under *their* system the nation will be richer.

But what is that to me and the thousands like me? What is that to the 38 million poor?

Is not the nation well off *now?* The Free Traders are never tired of boasting about our prosperity. The Protectionists admit it.

Yet there are 38 millions poor and half a million unemployed.

Is it not plain, then, that the question of the nation getting richer or poorer can have no interest for me and the thousands like me?

Suppose Free Trade *is* the best fiscal system.

Suppose that under Free Trade the nation is richer than it would be under Protection.

Does that guarantee me a living?

It does not. The nation's income has risen from 1,300 to 1,710 millions in twenty years under Free Trade. Yet the unemployed problem is no nearer solution than it was half a century ago.

Suppose Protection is the best fiscal system. Suppose that under Protection the nation would become richer than under Free Trade.

Will that guarantee me a living?

It will not. We have had Protection in this country, and Mr. Chamberlain says himself that the sufferings of the people under Protection were due not to dear food, but to "want of employment."

Then there are Germany, France, and the United States. They have Protection, and they have the unemployed.

The immediate problem is not how to get richer, but how to divide more fairly the riches we are getting now.

That is the question for me. That is the question for the unemployed and for the poor workers.

The Free Traders beg and pray of us not to vote for Protection, because Protection means dear food.

Is not that an astonishing argument to advance in the most prosperous country in the world?

Suppose Protection did mean dearer food. What of it?

If the policy of Protection could be proved to be a good policy for the British Empire, ought we to hold back because it would cost the nation something?

Suppose the policy of Protection cost the nation 100 millions a year. Suppose our income was 100 millions a year *less* through the adoption of Protection and Colonial Preference.

Couldn't the nation afford the sacrifice?

Decidedly—yes.

What a pitiable spectacle, then, would be the position of the Free Traders!

The Free Traders' position is a pitiable one *now*.

For when they call upon the working classes to defend the cheap loaf at all costs, when they tell them to remember "the hungry forties," and to vote for Free Trade, what are their arguments but an admission that *the working classes are too poor under Free Trade to make any sacrifice for any purpose whatever?*

Your food will cost you more! What an appeal to make to the citizens of the most prosperous country in the world!

And the Free Traders are right. The working classes *can't* afford to have their food taxed. They can't afford to have their wages reduced.

Does Mr. Chamberlain's plan offer me any hope?

Not the slightest. This great statesman tells the worker that under Protection he will get nine farthings a week more wages. He says there will be "more employment."

I am one of the unemployed. I have a right to live. I have a right to work. Does Mr. Chamberlain offer to restore that natural right?

Not at all. He doesn't admit the right. Therefore, I say to Mr. Chamberlain: "Your plan is not for me. It doesn't interest me. If I am in work I am not going to trouble about your nine farthings a week extra income; I thank you, but I beg of you not to waste your remaining energies in such a herculean task for my benefit. I should feel mean if you succeeded. Your policy might be a good thing for the Empire. It might make the *nation* richer than the Free Trade policy does. But does your programme include legislation for restoring to every British citizen the right to work? Will it insure work and wages, a decent livelihood, for every able and willing worker? No? Then I cannot consider it. I contend that there is enough wealth *now* for all. I contend that the nation has *now* the means of producing food, fuel, shelter, all the necessaries and luxuries for a healthy life for the whole people. Your plan does not admit that there is anything wrong in the distribution of the present income of the nation. The difference between your policy and

the Free Trade policy, as it affects me, as it affects the unemployed and the working classes, is the difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. It is a difference of nine farthings. I have no use for it."

Give us work. Give us work and wages. Give us decent houses to live in, give us good food, give us education and leisure, then we shall be able to consider the question of Free Trade or Protection impartially. If we found that a change of policy would weld the British people in closer union, if we found that a change of policy would enable us to achieve better our destiny of civilising the world, then, even if the change cost us something, we should make the sacrifice gladly.

As it is, we cannot make sacrifices. To force us to make sacrifices would be cruel. The starving, the underfed, the unemployed—is it statesmanship to attempt to build a great Empire out of these? No, sirs, your policies are doomed to fail which are not established on a basis of justice and right dealing.

I have a right to live. I have a right to work. Free Trade and Protection deny that right. Free Trade and Protection stand self-condemned. They have been tried and found wanting. We want a new policy.

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

HOW GOOD TRADE CAUSES UNEMPLOYMENT

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I have a right to live. How is that right to be assured to every willing man?

The champions of Free Trade and the champions of Protection tell me to trust in their remedies.

But I have shown that under both Free Trade and Protection the unemployed problem remains unsolved, and poverty is not abolished.

I have shown that good trade has not abolished unemployment.

I have shown that Economical Government is no remedy for unemployment, and that even in time of peace there is always a mass of unemployed.

Someone said to me, "Employment is entirely a question of trade. If we get more trade, we shall be able to employ more people. The only question is, will Free Trade or Protection bring the most trade?"

Well, I will try to show that however much trade increases under either system, *there is bound to be an unemployed problem.*

I will show that under either system *there never can be enough trade to find employment for every willing worker.*

First let us suppose that this country had no foreign trade at all.

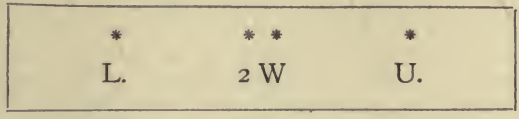
Suppose that we grew all our own food, and that the land supplied all the raw material for our manufactures.

Suppose that trade was carried on just in the same way as now, that the land was owned by a few people, and that employment could be obtained only by applying to a capitalist. Would there be an unemployed problem then?

Undoubtedly.

So long as we have private ownership of land and capital, and competition in industry, so long will there be an unemployed problem.

Let us see how this would work out, by means of a simple illustration.



£650 £100

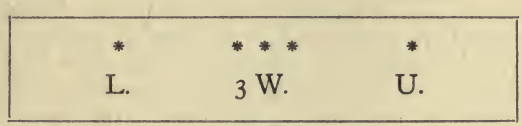
Here is an island. On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land and all the capital; and two Workers, who produce enough wealth for all three. There is also one Unemployed.

Of this wealth, the Landlord takes £650—thirteen times as much as each of the Workers. The Workers get £50 each.

Now the Landlord has enough—more than enough—to supply his wants. Why, then, should he find work for the Unemployed.

The law does not compel him to do so. To find work would be a bother. It would require thinking about. It is easier to throw alms to the Unemployed occasionally. So the unemployed problem remains unsolved. "When trade is better," the Landlord says, "the Unemployed will have a chance."

Years pass. Trade has improved. Population has increased.



£850 £150

The income of the island is now £1,000, an increase of 33 per cent.

The Landlord takes £850, the Workers take £50 a year each.

They cannot get more, because when they ask for a rise, they are told: "If you don't like your job, go. I can get another man any day."

There is always the Unemployed.

And so this state of things might go on for ever. Wealth may increase, trade may improve. But so long as the Workers have no right to the land, so long as the Workers are compelled to go to an Employer for the means of living, so long as the Unemployed is held over their heads as a weapon to frighten them into accepting a small share of the wealth they produce, so long will there be an unemployed problem. So long will the Workers be poor.

The condition of things in Great Britain, my countrymen, is not so simple, but it is practically the same.

It is not considered the duty of the Landlords and the Employers to provide work for every willing worker.

A man is expected to *find work for himself.*

But isn't it absurd to fix this responsibility on the poor landless man?

All wealth comes from the land. The poor man has no right to any land. Those who do own the land and the capital own all the means of life.

It is they, then, who ought to be held responsible for providing work for all.

But we know, do we not, that Landlords and Employers never think of anything but making profits for themselves?

If, in seeking profits, they provide work for some of the poor and landless, they think they have done a marvellous worthy deed! But they never realise that, as owners of the land and capital, they possess all the means of getting a living, and that the poor and landless are entirely dependent on them. They never suspect that it is their *duty* to provide work for all.

Why is this?

The reason is that Landlords and Capitalists are fighting one with another for the wealth produced by the workers.

Just as the workers compete with each other for work, so the Landlords and Capitalists compete with each other for rent and interest and profit.

The land and the capital do not belong to the same people all the time. Occasionally a poor man becomes a Capitalist and a Landowner. Luck, or cleverness, or cunning often win wealth for a poor man.

But the mass of the people are always poor. There are always the unemployed.

In short, getting riches, like getting a living, is a gamble. For the Landlord and the Capitalist class it is a pleasant, interesting, and exciting game.

For them it is not a question of life or death.

For the poor and landless, getting a living *is* a question of life or death.

For the Landlord and Capitalist class, trade is simply a question of more riches or less riches. Sometimes the rich man loses all. But generally speaking he is always sure of food, clothing, warmth, and shelter.

If the poor man loses his employment he must starve.

In times of bad trade, or strikes and lock-outs, the poor workers suffer terribly, while the Landlord and Employer class do not suffer at all.

It is only their bank balances that suffer.

Now, in these two scrambles—the scramble amongst the poor for a bare living, and the scramble amongst the Capitalists and Landlords for profit—have the poor workers and the unemployed any chance of improving their position?

Only to a very small extent. For, although the Landlords and the Employers compete with each other for profits, *they fight together as one man against any demand of the workers for a greater share of the wealth produced.*

How, then, can "more trade" solve the unemployed problem?

People see that more trade brings more employment, so they argue: "If you only get enough trade, there will be employment for all."

Now, I have shown that although there has been an enormous increase in our trade during the last sixty years, the unemployed problem is just as bad as ever.

What hope is there of still more trade providing a remedy?

None at all. Not the slightest.

So long as trade is a scramble for profits, there is bound to be an unemployed problem.

The cotton capitalists go into business to make profit. They do not go into business to provide all the people with sufficient cotton goods for their needs.

The coal capitalists go into business to make profits. They do not go into business to provide coal for all the people.

The boot capitalists go into business to make profits. They do not go into business to provide all the people with boots.

The farmers go into business to make profits. They do not go into business to provide sufficient food for all the people.

The cotton capitalists fight each other for the cotton trade, the coal capitalists fight each other for the coal trade, the boot capitalists fight each other for the boot trade, the farmers fight each other for the food trade.

What is the result?

There is always unemployment.

There is only so much trade to be done. If one factory is sufficient to supply the demand and another factory competes for the trade, one or both must suffer. There must be short time or unemployment.

A million tons of coal are required and can be produced by one colliery company. If another colliery company competes for the orders, one or both must suffer. There will be short time or unemployment.

We are told that there are too many boot factories in this country. Yet most of the people are short of boots, and thousands of boot-makers are unemployed.

We have this wasteful competition in all industries.

Shopkeepers are continually opening shops that are not required in order to capture the trade from another man.

How can the people all be employed under such a system?

Good trade comes. Work is plentiful. (But it is never plentiful enough for all.) What happens?

Suppose a boom in the cotton trade. Trade is good. What happens?

New mills are built, new machinery is laid down. New capital flows into the industry. Why?

Because the capitalists want to make profits. They want to take a hand in the game of grab. Large dividends are being made.

And the result? More mills and factories are put up than are needed. There is over-production, fierce competition, then bad trade, short time, and unemployment as bad as before.

What is the use of good trade? Good trade means that there is more employment, but never enough employment for all. It also means plentiful profits.

Who gets the plentiful profits?

The Landlords and the Employers.

What follows?

They are not able to spend or consume the big share of the wealth they take. They have all the luxuries they want, yet they have still more money to spend. What do they do with it?

They invest it.

What is the result?

If they invest their money in *new* industries they "find employment" for a larger population.

But if they invest in old-established industries and compete with them for the trade, they cause fierce competition, a fall of prices, short time, strikes, lock-outs, and unemployment.

Thus it happens that unemployment is caused because there is *too much wealth.* There is what is called over-production.

The terrible sufferings of the colliers and the cotton operatives in 1893 were due to the facts that there were too many cotton mills and too many collieries! There were not enough customers for the cotton and coal produced.

Yet millions of people were short of clothes and coal.

How it is that capitalists and speculators can go into a business, and by building more factories or works than are required throw people out of employment?

They can do it because they have the money to speculate with?

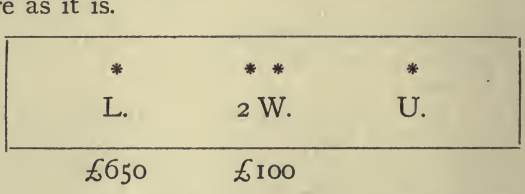
Why have they the money to speculate with?

Because Landlords, Capitalists, and Shareholders take such a large share of the wealth produced by the workers.

Unemployment from this cause frequently happens in this country.

Thus one cause of unemployment is the LOW WAGES of the workers.

If the workers had a larger share of the wealth they produce, unemployment would never be so severe as it is.



Here is an island. On that island there are: A Landlord, who owns all the land and capital; two Workers, wo do all the work; and one Unemployed.

The Landlord takes as his share of the wealth produced £650.

This is much more than he requires for his own consumption, so he decides to invest the balance in a new industry.

He finds that the one Unemployed is an excellent singer, so he employs him to sing for him, and pays him.

Thus there is no unemployed problem. The Workers and the singer are poor, but all are occupied.

Now, suppose that instead of investing in a new employment he invests in an old industry. Suppose he starts a new farm, and thus finds work for the Unemployed.

What would the result be?

The two Workers were already producing enough wealth for all. The wealth produced by the new man would consequently be Over-production. There would be Depression in Trade. "I shall have to sack you," says the Landlord to Worker No. 1. "There is a glut of farm produce. Trade is bad."

Result—there is again an unemployed problem, caused by the Landlord having surplus money for investment.

If the Landlord, instead of investing his surplus wealth in industry, had raised the wages of the workers, and shortened their hours, so finding employment for the Unemployed, the whole population of that island would have been prosperous and contented.

Are not our rich people in a similar position?

They have money far beyond the amount necessary to supply their needs. What can they do with it?

Having satisfied all their luxurious tastes and so "found employment" for an army of flunkeys and useless workers at ornamental trades, they have still large balances. These they must "invest."

Their object in investing is to make more profits, not to find work for the unemployed. Consequently they don't trouble to inquire whether they will be competing with an existing trade or not. If they think there is a chance of getting the trade they take it, and so cause unemployment.

They also invest a good many millions in foreign countries every year.

When British workmen are walking the streets starving, when statesmen and newspapers are deploring

the state of trade, our rich people are investing millions in foreign industries.

Example: WE lent Japan ten millions last year when the distress from unemployment was most severe.

It is this fund which must be tapped to find work for the unemployed.

If, as I have shown, more and more trade has little or no effect on the unemployed problem, is it not time we began to look for a solution of the problem by some other method?

If, as I have shown, our system of trade is the *cause* of unemployment, is it not time we mended or ended the system?

It is the system that is wrong. It is the scramble that is wrong.

If you throw six pennies to a crowd of starving kiddies and some of them get none, will they all get a share if you throw twelve instead? It doesn't follow.

OTHER CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot get work.

The Fiscal experts tell me that employment depends on Free Trade, or on Protection.

The Free Traders tell me to put my trust in Free Trade, and all will be well—some day.

The Protectionists tell me to put my trust in Protection, and employment will be found for hundreds of thousands more workers.

Now, before I show how impossible it is that these fiscal fakements can solve the unemployed problem, I wish to refer to some other causes of unemployment under the present system of competition and private ownership of land and capital.

I have shown that unemployment is bound to take place under competition, because capitalists are always fighting each other for the trade.

More mills, more mines, more shops are opened than are necessary to supply the demand.

The consequence is that some of them go under, and the workers are thrown on the streets. This is happening continually.

I have also shown that unemployment from this cause is intensified because landlords and capitalists, the very rich, take such an enormous share of the national income that they cannot spend it on themselves, and consequently have to invest it.

Anxious to make more riches,, they often rush into new undertakings which are not required. Then there is over-production, followed by unemployment.

Watch the cotton trade—1905 was a boom year.

"The profits of spinning companies have been on

an unexampled scale, and *mill building has run riot*," says Mr. William Tattersall in his Annual Circular.

I have shown, too, that the rich cause unemployment at home by investing their wealth in foreign countries.

WE have £2,000,000,000 invested abroad.

WE!

We made it. The workers made that wealth. The rich took it, and sent it abroad to *find employment for foreigners.*

Is that patriotism?

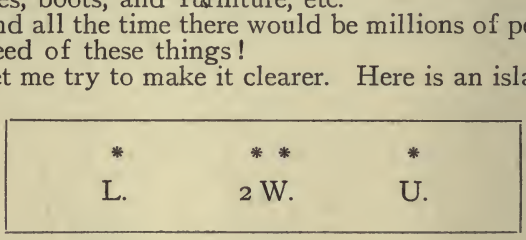
It may be asked: "What else could the rich do? You say they would cause unemployment if they invested it at home."

Just so. If they invested the capital they now send abroad in old home industries, there would be more over-production, causing more unemployment than there is.

There would be over-production of coal, clothes, houses, boots, and furniture, etc.

And all the time there would be millions of people in need of these things!

Let me try to make it clearer. Here is an island:



On that island there are: One Landlord, who owns all the land and capital; two Workers, who produce all the wealth; and one Unemployed.

The Landlord's income is £650, thirteen times as much as one Worker's.

He has more than he knows how to use, so he decides to invest his surplus.

The Workers say, "If you invest your money at home you will throw us out of employment."

So he invests it abroad.

But the Workers are poor, and there is one Unemployed.

Now, what is the proper remedy for that state of things?

The Landlord ought to take *less* of the incomes so that the Workers could have *more.*

What would follow?

The Workers would be so much better off that *they could afford to find employment for the one Unemployed. They could pay him to make things they required.*

Do you see? If the workers of this country had a fair share of the wealth they produce, unemployment would never be so bad.

Why? Because the workers are in need of so many things—better houses, food, clothes, coal, boots, furniture, books, musical instruments, pictures. If they had more money to spend, they would be able to find employment for a much greater number in these trades.

But the very rich have already more than enough of these things, so that if they invest their money in these industries, there will naturally be overproduction. There will be no customers to buy the goods. The poor have no money, and the rich don't want the goods.

But if they were not so rich, they could not invest in speculative industries, and they could not send capital abroad to find employment for foreigners while their countrymen are starving.

There are other causes of unemployment.

There is machinery.

New inventions in machinery often throw large numbers out of employment.

Now, my countrymen, I am no enemy of machinery. But I have a right to live, and *I deny the right of the inventor, or any man, to take that right from me.*

I am told that it is wrong to object to machinery because more wealth is produced by machinery, and *everybody benefits by the increased wealth.*

I deny that *everybody* benefits by the increased wealth due to the invention of machinery.

The workers seldom benefit, and then only to a small extent.

Who does benefit?

It is the owners of the machines, the capitalists, who take the bulk of the increased wealth.

A new machine is invented which displaces, say, 1,000 workers. What is to become of them?

They are told that they will be able to find employment in some new industry.

But do new industries spring up at a moment's notice to find employment for the displaced workers?

Who starts new industries? Capitalists, do they not?

Very well. Do we find a capitalist waiting to meet our 1,000 displaced workers and offering them work at their usual wages?

Not on this planet. The displaced workers have to shift for themselves. Often they suffer severely and never raise their heads again.

Is this right? Is this fair? Does your moral law say that such treatment is just?

If it is for the benefit of the whole nation that new inventions should be allowed to displace human workers, then I contend that it is the duty of the nation to make provision for the workers so displaced.

Work cannot be created by the unemployed, the landless, and moneyless. It is not their fault they are displaced. Somebody benefits by the machinery. It is unjust, then, that the workers should suffer.

Just as improvements in machinery displace workers, so do improvements in organisation of industries, such as combinations and trusts.

A number of firms amalgamate, and by so doing are able to close, say, one factory, and to dispense with the services of the "hands" employed there, as well as a number of clerks and travellers.

Who benefits?

Not the displaced workers. They *may* find employment elsewhere, but there is no certainty

about it. New industries do not fall out of the skies.

Is that right? Is that just?

If improvements which enable landlords and capitalists to make more wealth are introduced, does that justify the starvation of other men and their families?

Workers are thrown out of employment in other ways quite outside their control.

Many workers in season trades suffer severely. Then there are changes of fashion. And there is foreign competition.

The workers in season and fashion trades suffer largely because the rich have too much money.

The fashion trades are always fighting amongst themselves for the favour of the rich. Now one gets it, now another. The whim of a "leader of fashion" may mean terrible suffering for a large number of workers, who lose their employment because "the fashion changes."

Then there is foreign competition. The Free Traders deny that foreign competition causes unemployment. I believe they are wrong. But suppose they are right. Suppose foreign competition does not cause unemployment. That does not prove that Free Trade is a remedy for the unemployment which exists.

The question is: Will Free Trade or Protection remove the causes of unemployment which I have dealt with above?

Will Free Trade or Protection abolish competition?

Will Free Trade or Protection abolish the scramble for profits amongst the employers, and the scramble for a living amongst the workers?

Will Free Trade or Protection make the over-rich less rich? Will Free Trade or Protection raise the wages of the workers?

Will Free Trade or Protection protect the workers against new inventions and new methods of industry?

Will Free Trade or Protection regularise employment, so that those employed in season and fashion trades will not suffer from unemployment?

In short, will Free Trade or Protection restore the right to live?

THE QUACK REMEDIES: FREE TRADE AND PROTECTION

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot get work.

Mr. Chamberlain comes forward and says: "Support my plan, and I will guarantee "profitable employment" for thousands more workers. My plan is the only remedy for unemployment."

Now, my countrymen, when a politician tells us that he has a plan which will solve a social problem like unemployment, we are naturally curious. Politicians have come, and politicians have gone. They have produced plans and schemes innumberable, but still the problem is with us.

Mr. Chamberlain said: "The greatest boon that could be conferred upon the working people of this country was such a reform as would ensure to every industrious man full and constant employment at fair wages."

Mr. Chamberlain is right. Will his plan confer that boon?

When I examine the plan what is my first impression?

It is a sensation of amazement mingled with disgust. I find that this glorious new plan which is to give constant work for every man is a quack medicine which has been tried by every country on the globe—and being a quack remedy, has failed to effect a cure.

Mr. Chamberlain's plan is Protection and Preference. Protection against foreign competitors, and Preference for our Colonies.

We have had Protection in this country. Under that fiscal system did all our people find profitable employment?

Mr. Chamberlain himself argues that it was not dear food, but *want of employment* that caused the distress in the "hungry forties."

But we need not go to ancient history for examples to prove that Protection is no remedy for the unemployed problem?

France, Germany, and the United States are Protectionist countries to-day.

Are there no unemployed in these countries?

We know that these countries are confronted with just the same unemployed problem as our Free Trade kingdom.

The Tariff Reformers tell us that these countries are progressing more rapidly than we are. They tell us that their wealth is increasing, and that wages are rising more rapidly than with us. They tell us that unemployment is *less severe*, and they claim that these conditions are the result of the fiscal policy of Protection.

The Free Traders, on the other hand, point to our enormous wealth, our enormous foreign trade, our high wages, and prove to their own satisfaction that these things are the result of Free Trade.

Now, if Mr. Chamberlain's plan is a cure for unemployment, how is it there are large numbers of unemployed in Germany, France, and the United States?

If Free Trade is the cure for unemployment, why is there such a mass of unemployed in this country?

Neither of the Fiscal Fakirs answers this question.

The only answer to that question is that Protection is no remedy, and Free Trade is no remedy. Mr. Chamberlain will not face the question; the Free Traders will not face it.

They must both be made to face it. If you, my countrymen, sincerely wish to solve the problems of poverty and unemployment, you will face it and grapple with it until the answer is found.

This is a Free Trade, or a free imports, country.

Everyone here knows that foreign trade, and increased foreign trade, is no remedy for unemployment. Mr. Chamberlain then puts forward his plan. At first it is rejected, as being worse than the disease.

But will it always be rejected?

We know how a man distracted by long-continued pain will fly to any remedy suggested with plausibility and confidence. Such a man is not in a condition to investigate calmly the credentials of the medicine offered.

You, my countrymen, are in like case. You are suffering from this disease of poverty and unemployment. You are looking for a remedy, and you have rejected one of the medicines which your grandfathers tried and found wanting. But you are sticking to the other remedy of Free Trade, and you know that also has proved a failure.

What are you going to do? If the disease gets worse, if you become temporarily distracted by the pain of it, is there no danger of your flying back to the *other* quack medicine, Protection, and giving it another trial?

I think, my countrymen, there is such a danger. Mr. Chamberlain's next chance depends on circumstances. If these circumstances happen, and if you are not prepared with a new remedy, you are likely to fall a victim to the plausibilities of Mr. Chamberlain's plan.

For Mr. Chamberlain's plan is plausible, and under certain circumstances these plausibilities will, to the sick man, seem like eternal truths.

Mr. Chamberlain says that our trade is threatened by foreign competition. He says that foreign goods are coming to this country free of taxes and displacing our labour, while our goods cannot get into these foreign countries because they are too heavily taxed.

Thus, he says, we are hit twice. We buy from foreigners and so throw our own countrymen out of work, and we cannot sell to foreigners because they tax our goods in order to protect their own trades against our competition.

Now, the Free Traders deny these statements.

They say that foreign goods cannot displace British labour, because every import from a foreign country must be paid for by an export from this country.

So, they say, if foreign goods come into this country, they must find employment for British labour in making the goods to pay for the imports.

For example, here are two countries:

ENGLAND:	AMERICA:
Imports from America: Wheat, £1,000,000.	Exports to England: Wheat, £1,000,000.

In America there is a farmer who exports to England wheat to the value of £1,000,000.

Now, the American farmer wants paying for his wheat. He does not want gold. He cannot get gold. There is very little gold in England, and never enough to pay for half our imports.

Consequently, say the Free Traders, he must be paid in goods of some kind, and to make those goods British labour must be employed. Therefore foreign goods give employment to British labour, and ought to be encouraged.

The man in England who imports the wheat is a cotton manufacturer. To pay for the wheat he sends to the American farmer cotton goods to the value of £1,000,000. The account is then square.

ENGLAND:	AMERICA:
Exports: Cotton, £1,000,000.	Imports: Cotton, £1,000,000.

This argument of the Free Traders seems to be sound. We know a man in business in England will not export goods abroad unless he expects to be paid

for them. We know that a man in a foreign country will not export goods to England unless he expects to be paid for them.

It seems absurd, then, for Mr. Chamberlain to say that foreign goods displace British labour. Every import must be paid for by an export. Trade is barter and must balance.

For every £1,000 worth of goods you export you require £1,000 worth of goods in exchange, or £1,000 in gold or paper money, which will enable you to buy other goods.

As a matter of fact, foreign trade is no different from home trade.

Does your butcher ever export beef to your house for nothing? Or does he require an import of money to balance the export of beef?

Does the cotton manufacturer in Lancashire export cotton goods to London for nothing?

Does your employer ever export wages to you without getting an import of labour in exchange?

Imports must balance exports. Foreigners are not so good-natured as to send goods to us without payment.

If you will get rid of the idea that countries trade with each other, and remember that it is not countries, but individuals in those countries who trade with each other, you will not easily be misled by the Fiscal Fakirs.

Trading with a man at the other end of the world is no different from trading with a man in the next street.

If you sell a pair of boots to Mr. Chamberlain in Birmingham, it is *you* who sell the boots, not the nation.

If you sell a million pairs of boots to a German shop, the Fiscal Fakirs talk about the national export of boots. But they are not *our* exports, they are *your* exports.

You want payment from the German house and you get it, just as you get payment for the pair you sell to Mr. Chamberlain. Trade must balance, or it would not be carried on.

So if you import £1,000 worth of meat, it is you who import it, not the nation. It is you who pay for it, not the nation. Does a foreign trader ever export goods to an English trader without payment? Of course not: exports must balance imports.

It would seem, then, that when Free Traders claim that imports are always good for the country that they are right, and that Mr. Chamberlain is wrong when he says that imports sometimes displace British labour.

But Mr. Chamberlain is right, and the Free Traders are wrong. One of the Free Trade champions said, in the *Daily News:*

> Free Traders cannot too often point out that it is not true that goods brought into a country rob workmen of wages.
>
> Goods are only brought in for value received, and the only way in which we can pay for imports is by exporting goods or services.

Notwithstanding which, I say Mr. Chamberlain is right, and the Free Traders are wrong.

I explained in a former chapter how, in the home trade, one man is continually capturing the trade of another man.

Thousands of small shopkeepers, for instance, have been driven out of business by the big trusts.

Consider what happens in a village fifteen miles from London.

There is a grocer's shop, which supplies grocery to the whole neighbourhood.

Suddenly, Whiteley, the Universal Provider of London, determines to make daily deliveries by van in that village.

What is the result?

The local grocer loses half his trade. He is ruined by "foreign" competition.

The Free Trader says, "Foreign goods are a blessing. There is never an import without an export. Whiteley's imports of grocery *must* be paid for by an export."

Yes. Of course. Whiteley's grocery is paid for by an export of the villagers' money.

But the local grocer is ruined.

The villagers' money, which used to find employment for the local grocer, now finds employment for the foreigner, Whiteley. The money formerly exported to the local grocer is now exported to London.

Now if this kind of thing happens in the home trade, why can it not happen in foreign trade?

Remember, it is not the nation which trades, but individual men and firms and companies who trade with each other.

Take another case. Suppose you have a boot shop in London, and every quarter you send an order for £1,000 worth of boots to Northampton.

That £1,000 finds employment for a number of bootmakers.

An American traveller calls and offers to sell you similar boots at a reduced price. You order from him, and give no more orders to Northampton.

What is the result?

Your £1,000, which used to give employment to the Northampton boot trade, now gives employment to the American boot trade. Northampton bootmakers are thrown on the streets, and march to London, bootless themselves, in order to demonstrate the blessings of Free Trade!

The Free Traders cannot deny that this kind of thing happens. It is a commonplace of the competitive scramble for profits.

"But," they say, "if the local grocer loses his trade, or if the Northampton bootmakers lose their trade, it is a proof that they are not so well fitted to carry on that trade as Whiteley's and the American boot manufacturers.

"If," they say, "Whiteley's grocery and American boots are cheaper than local grocery and Northampton boots, it is better for the nation that the local grocer and the Northampton bootmakers should lose their trade.

"If," they say, "the local grocer is driven out of

the grocery trade, and the Northampton manufacturer is driven out of the boot trade, they will employ their labour and capital in some other industry."

How nice! But do they?

Does the local grocer find it easy to employ his capital in some other industry? Do the Northampton bootmakers find an employer waiting to give them work when the lose their jobs?

Not in this country. The local grocer may lose all his capital before he gives up the struggle with Whiteley's. The Northampton manufacturer may lose all his capital before he gives up the struggle with foreign competition.

"Ah," says the Free Trader, "but think of the cheaper grocery, and the cheaper boots."

Yes, let us think of them.

What good does it do me, my countrymen, one of the unemployed, to think of the wealth of the Rothschilds, or the cheap boots and the cheap bread and the cheap clothes of those who benefit by these things?

I am one of the nation. Are these things, that are so good for the nation, good for me? How can these cheap wares do me any good, who have *no money at all?*

The fact is, that Free Trade and cheap goods are only good for certain individuals. They are good for those who benefit by them.

Competition is good for certain individuals. It is deadly for those who suffer from it.

Free Trade with foreign countries is simply a branch of trade in general. It is carried on under the system of competition. And I showed in a previous chapter that competition is the cause of a good deal of our unemployment.

Just as one home trader grabs the trade of another home trader, so may a foreign trader grab the trade of a home trader.

In both cases the result for the Briton is loss of capital and unemployment.

So that Mr. Chamberlain is right when he says that foreign goods may displace British labour. How far they do displace British labour is a question of statistics.

Now, Mr. Chamberlain proposes to stop this foreign competition by protecting our industries by means of a tax on foreign goods.

Will his plan, by keeping trade at home, solve the unemployed problem?

WHY MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S PLAN IS NO REMEDY

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot get work.

Will Mr. Chamberlain's plan provide profitable employment for every willing worker in this country?

Mr. Chamberlain says foreign manufactures are coming into this country which rob the British worker of employment.

He proposes to remedy this evil by putting a tax of 10 per cent. on foreign manufactures.

Now, if foreign manufactures are beating home-made goods because they are cheaper, and if a tax of 10 per cent. kept the foreign goods out, what would it mean to the home trade?

The 10 per cent. tax on manufactures is estimated to produce £9,000,000 a year, *if* the foreign goods still continue to come, and the foreigner pays the tax.

So that £90,000,000 a year more trade would be done at home if the foreign goods did not come at all.

Now, if the foreigner pays the tax, and the goods still continue to come in, no more work will be found for British labour.

Mr. Chamberlain evidently thinks the foreigner *will* pay the tax, because he hopes to use the £9,000,000 to reduce other taxes.

How, then, can this part of the plan help to solve the unemployed problem?

Suppose the tax were raised high enough to keep out the foreign manufactures altogether.

Then we should, according to Mr. Chamberlain, do the £90,000,000 trade at home.

This would give employment to, let us say, roughly, 600,000 men at 30s. a week.

This looks promising. Work for 600,000 more of our own people! Marvellous.

But let us examine the matter more closely.

We, that is certain British traders, *export* manufactures. Last year we exported manufactures to the value of £270,000,000.

Now if we stop the import of cheap foreign manufactures by means of a heavy tax, what is likely to happen?

The foreigners would want to get their own back. They would raise their taxes against us, and they would fight us still more keenly in neutral markets. We should lose some of our export trade.

We are losing trade to the foreigners because their goods are cheaper.

If we shut foreign goods out, we should have to pay more for our own home-made goods, and we should not stand a chance against our foreign competitors in neutral markets.

Result — unemployment in our export trades. What has Mr. Chamberlain to say to this?

But, in any case, if we decide to shut out foreign goods now coming in, we shall lose an equal amount of export trade.

The Free Traders tell us that if we shut out £90,000,000 worth of foreign goods, we are *bound* to lose £90,000,000 of export trade.

They are right so far. Every import made by a trader must be paid for by an export, and if we shut out £90,000,000 worth of foreign goods, we shall inevitably lose £90,000,000 of export trade.

Remember that foreign trade is done between individuals in the different countries, and not between the nations.

The makers of the £90,000,000 of foreign manufactures now coming in receive £90,000,000 of gold or paper money from English traders. Foreign goods are paid for mostly in paper money.

Now, gold or paper money is no use to anyone unless he can buy goods or services with it. The foreign traders pass this paper money on to other foreign traders. The other traders buy goods or services with it, and eventually this paper money finds its way back to the United Kingdom.

It must do. Because the foreigners who finally hold the paper money want goods for it. Paper money is no use to them. They want goods. They get goods. Those goods are our exports.

So, if we stop importing £90,000,000 of foreign goods we shall stop paying £90,000,000 of paper money to foreigners. Foreigners will thus have £90,000,000 less to buy British goods with, and we shall lose £90,000,000 export trade.

But the Free Traders always forget their other argument. If. they say, a man is driven out of one trade, he will find employment for his capital in some other.

Now, if we shut out £90,000,000 of foreign goods in order to give £90,000,000 of work to our own unemployed, those unemployed will receive the gold or paper money formerly paid to foreigners.

There will be £90,000,000 less of our money in foreign hands, but there will be £90,000,000 more in British hands. Those who were formerly unemployed will have £90,000,000 to spend. Cannot they spend it in employing the exporters who have lost £90,000,000 of export trade?

Many people boggle at this statement. But it is quite simple. When you see it you cannot understand how you ever missed seeing it.

Let us go over it again.

Every import in the way of trade is paid for by an export.

Imports, then, give employment to exporters.

If you stop an import, the result is to stop the export which paid for it.

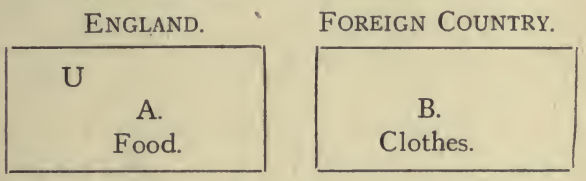
If you stop a foreign import you throw the worker who made the export out of employment.

Therefore it is a bad thing to stop foreign imports,

because by so doing you throw exporters out of employment. That is as far as some people get. They always forget the unemployed.

The argument goes on: The problem is how to find work for British workmen. If a foreigner is doing work which could be done by an unemployed Briton, stopping the foreign import need not throw the exporter out of employment.

To illustrate. Here are two islands.



A grows food, which he exports to B. B makes clothes, which he exports to A.

Stop the import of clothes into England, and you stop the export of food. A, the exporter, will lose his foreign trade. But why should not U, the unemployed in England, make the clothes required by A? If he did so, A could send to U the food he formerly exported to the Foreign Country, and he would have as much work as before.

Is it clear now?

If we stop £90,000,000 worth of foreign goods, we shall lose £90,000,000 of export trade. Foreign trade will show a decrease of £180,000,000.

But if the shutting out of £90,000,000 of foreign goods gives the same amount of employment to unemployed Britons, then the home trade would increase £180,000,000.

Instead of 600,000 British workers (in export trades) exchanging goods with 600,000 foreigners, 600,000 British workers would exchange goods with 600,000 *other* British workers.

It is a very simple matter. It is a question of patriotism. Ought we, as a nation, to find employment for our own people, or to prefer foreigners?

At present we allow British employers and

capitalists to do the best for *themselves*. That is, to make the most money. Many of them find they can make the most money by finding employment for foreigners. Profits, not patriotism, is their motto.

Individual Britons make money, but hundreds of thousands are unemployed and millions are poor. As a nation, our losses under this system in wealth and health and stamina are terrible.

Well, if we shut out £90,000,000 of foreign manufactures and so found £90,000,000 more employment for British labour, that would be a step towards the solution of the unemployed problem.

It is a pretty picture. *But it is not Mr. Chamberlain's plan.*

No. According to Mr. Chamberlain, the foreigners will pay the 10 per cent. tax on the £90,000,000 of goods they send us, and we shall take £9,000,000 from them to relieve our taxation.

Mr. Chamberlain evidently counts on the foreign goods still coming in. But if the foreign goods still come in, how can more employment be found for British labour?

No more employment will be found. This part of the plan, then, is useless as a remedy for unemployment.

Next, Mr. Chamberlain proposes to tax our foreign food imports. Now, if we pay extra taxes on our food we shall be no better off, even if the foreigner does pay the £9,000,000 on imported manufactures.

The tax proposed is 5 per cent. on foreign meat and dairy produce, and 2s. per quarter on corn.

Mr. Chamberlain's object is to encourage trade with our Colonies in preference to encouraging trade with foreign countries.

If, then, this tax on food stops the import of some foreign food and transfers the trade to the Colonies, what effect will that have on employment in this country?

None at all. It will not at any rate provide *more* employment.

If certain British traders give their orders in future to traders in Canada or Australia, instead of

to traders in America or Germany, what difference will that make to the unemployed here?

None at all. Instead of foreigners being employed by the orders of those British traders, Canadians or Australians will be employed. Our unemployed problem will not be touched.

But that is not all. In return for our Preference the Colonies are to be induced to purchase manufactures from us, which they are now buying from foreign countries.

The Colonies are buying £30,000,000 of foreign manufactures. Mr. Chamberlain thinks they would transfer this trade to us, and so provide wages of £15,000,000 a year extra for British labour.

That is all this brilliant plan amounts to.

Our exports were to be increased by £30,000,000 to the Colonies, and our imports were to be increased by £30,000,000 from the Colonies. Extra trade, now being done with foreigners.

This plan was put forward in 1903, *and while Mr. Chamberlain has been talking about it our total export trade has gone up more than £30,000,000.*

Has this great increase in trade solved the unemployed problem? Has it abolished poverty and low wages?

On the contrary, while this great increase in our export trade was taking place thousands of unemployed were marching the streets of our large towns, the Prime Minister was besieged by unemployed women, and Parliament was compelled to pretend to deal with the question by passing a useless Unemployed Workmen's Act.

Now, my countrymen, what is the use of Mr. Chamberlain or anyone else trying to show that an increase of trade, either £30,000,000 or £300,000,000, can solve the unemployed problem in the face of the facts?

Good trade never did, good trade never can solve the unemployed problem.

Mr. Chamberlain complained that our exports were not advancing as rapidly as they ought to do. He talked of getting £30,000,000 extra export trade

as if it would be a marvellous achievement and would work wonders in the direction of solving unemployment and poverty.

Without his help the export trade made a tremendous leap last year, and still the unemployed are marching on London, still the workhouses and dosshouses are full, still the 12,000,000 underfed are underfed.

If you turn to the chapter on the causes of unemployment you will understand why this increase of trade has had so little effect on poverty and unemployment.

You will remember I said that one cause of unemployment was the low wages of the workers and the large profits of the capitalists.

The capitalists have more than they can spend, and they do not always invest their surplus in this country because there are no "openings," and because they can get more profits abroad.

Now, we had a big export boom last year. Trade revived. What is the result?

"We are once again in the position of investing capital abroad to a very large extent."

Those are the words of Mr. Felix Schuster, the Chairman of the Union of London and Smith's Bank, Limited, one of the best-known authorities on finance in the City of London.

WE are investing capital abroad.

Who are WE?

Not the unemployed, not the 12,000,000 underfed, not the 20,000,000 very poor. I have not invested any capital abroad, my countrymen.

While our unemployed are starving and asking for work, while millions of our people lack decent houses, decent clothes, and decent furniture, WE, that is, a few rich men, are investing capital abroad TO FIND WORK FOR FOREIGNERS.

The Free Traders are jubilant about this state of things, but don't you think there is something wrong, my countrymen?

Would Mr. Chamberlain's plan stop this export of capital to foreign countries?

Not at all. Mr. Chamberlain does not want to stop the export of capital.

Protection does not stop the capitalists of America and Germany and France exporting their capital abroad. That is one reason why there are so many unemployed in these protected countries.

If the export of capital to foreign countries were stopped, that capital would have to be invested in this country.

That capital could not be invested in this country unless there was a demand for more goods.

There could not be a demand for more goods unless the people had money to buy them.

The people could not have the money to buy them unless their wages were raised.

The poor workers and the unemployed could find employment for the capital which is now sent abroad, but Mr. Chamberlain's plan does not pretend to reduce the enormous rents and profits of the rich which they invest abroad. Mr. Chamberlain says he will fight any such plan.

Therefore, my countrymen, I reject *his* plan.

A plan which could only result in adding £15,000,000 to the wages of the workers of this country is a plan to be laughed at.

Turn to the chapter on the division of the wealth produced in this country.

You will there find that a small class of 1,250,000 persons take £585,000,000 a year, while the rest of our 43,000,000 take only £1,125,000,000.

You will find that 5,000,000 people take £830,000,000, nearly half the national income, while 38,000,000 people take only £880,000,000.

Now, my countrymen, a plan which refuses to consider the injustice and the insanity of such a division of wealth is futile. It cannot possibly be a remedy for unemployment and poverty.

Most of the wealth taken by the very rich is not earned. Other people make the wealth. The rich enjoy and waste it without giving any service in return.

Are such conditions just? Are they good for

the nation? Does your moral law say they are right?

Read *Britain for the British*, and consider the facts given in Chapter I.

We pay 500 or 600 millions a year in rent and interest to idle landlords and shareholders, and Mr. Chamberlain offers, after a great struggle, to find another £15,000,000 a year wages!

Is not such a plan preposterous and ridiculous?

And remember, I have taken the plan at Mr. Chamberlain's valuation.

The Free Traders tell us that if we tax foreign imports and foreign food, that all our goods will increase in price, that the poor will become poorer, and the rich richer, and that if we shut our foreign goods altogether, great Trusts will arise in this country which will fleece the public, and benefit only the capitalist and the landlord.

All this is true. These things do happen in Protection countries.

If our home employers had no foreign competition to fear, they would soon find it to their interest to combine to stop competition at home, to form huge Trusts. By these means they could fix the price of their goods and they could fix the wages.

Mr. Chamberlain talks about wages going up. They might go up, if the workers pushed very hard. But what is the use of wages going up if prices are raised and rents are raised?

So long as workers compete with each other for work, so long will wages be low.

So long as capitalist employers own all the capital, so long will workers' lives be at their mercy.

So long as landlords own all the land and make the workers pay the tax of "rent," so long will much of their wages be filched from them.

The workers must go to a capitalist employer to earn wages, and when they have got wages the landlord and the profit-hunter are waiting for them with a gun.

The capitalist pays the worker too little. The profit-hunter and the landlord take too much.

Between the two the worker's pockets are almost emptied.

Mr. Chamberlain's plan would do nothing to remove these evils.

No plan which would result only in more trade can solve the unemployed problem. That is all Mr. Chamberlain offers to do. Therefore, I say, his plan is useless. It can deceive no one who understands how competition and the unequal division of wealth are bound to cause unemployment.

Is Free Trade any more likely to cure the evil?

WHY FREE TRADE IS NO REMEDY

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot get work.

I have shown that Mr. Chamberlain's plan is useless as a remedy for poverty and unemployment.

I have a right to work. The laws made by you, my countrymen, have taken that right from me.

Will Free Trade restore me the right to work? Do Free Traders admit my right to work?

Free Traders do not. We have had Free Trade for sixty years, and the Free Trade party has never made an attempt to solve the unemployed problem.

The Free Trade party has no remedy for unemployment.

Against Mr. Chamberlain's plan, what is the great argument of the Free Traders?

Your food will cost you more.

All they can do is to point to the enormous increase in wealth since 1846, and to say: "Your food and other goods will cost you more."

For the twenty million very poor, for the twelve million underfed, that is their only word of hope. "Beware of Protection. Your food will cost you more."

Some day. Some day, under Free Trade, there will be so much wealth that everybody will have enough.

Some day? But why should I, and the hundreds of thousands like me, be fobbed off with a tale like that? For sixty years the working classes, the starving, and the unemployed have heard the same story. We have lost hope. We no longer have any

faith in Free Trade as a remedy for poverty and unemployment.

Free Trade will not do, my countrymen. In twenty years OUR national income has risen from £1,300,000,000 to £1,710,000,000.

We produce £410,000,000 more a year. The rich were rich twenty years ago. Who gets that £410,000,000 extra?

The poor are still poor, and the unemployed are a multitude. Why has not that £410,000,000 extra income solved the unemployed problem?

If Free Trade is the system under which the workers benefit most, how is it that extra £410,000,000 has not gone into the pockets of the poor and the unemployed? The rich were rich twenty years ago.

Suppose, under Free Trade, the national income increases another £400,000,000 a year. Will poverty and unemployment be abolished? Will the extra income go to those who need it most?

The answer to these questions is, No.

As in the past, the idle landlord and the idle shareholder will take the bulk of the wealth. The poor will still be poor. The unemployed problem will not be touched.

The unemployed may, indeed, become more numerous. When Mr. Chamberlain said that the "nation" might become richer, and at the same time employment might be less, he was right.

Under Free Trade, it is possible for a foreign trader to take trade away from a British trader. If for any reason we lost an important trade, or several small trades, our unemployed would naturally grow.

The Free Trade theory that the capital and the labour in the lost trades *will* find other employment is simply theory. Suppose they didn't.

The Free Trader has no answer except "Look at OUR enormous wealth."

My countrymen, looking at another man's wealth does not feed me, clothe me, and house me.

If you read the chapter on the causes of

unemployment, you will understand why Free Trade is no remedy.

Free Trade is mostly discussed in connection with foreign trade; but foreign trade is only a branch of trade in general, and the same rules as to the distribution of the wages and profits apply to both home and foreign trade.

The landlord and the capitalist take the bulk of the wealth produced. How, then, can increase of foreign trade solve the unemployed problem?

The rich get too much now. If they get still more what can they do with it?

They cannot invest it at home, because the workers have not wages enough to buy any more goods.

The rich must, then, invest their extra riches abroad either in foreign countries or British Colonies.

If they invest abroad, their capital will find employment for the foreigner (or the Colonist), and *the interest on the investments, which comes home in the form of goods (imports), may throw British workmen out of employment.*

We have £2,000,000,000 invested abroad. That is, a few rich people have this sum invested abroad.

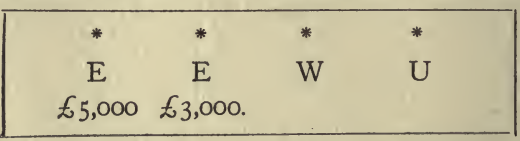
The interest on these investments is estimated to amount to at least £100,000,000 a year.

This £100,000,000 is paid in the form of goods—imports.

Now, two things may result from this influx of dividends from British capital invested abroad.

The imports which come as dividends may find employment for unemployed British workmen, or they may compete with existing trades, and throw more British workmen out of work.

Here is an island. On that island there are two



capitalist Employers, a number of Workers, and some Unemployed.

One Employer has an income of £5,000, and, having supplied all his wants, has a surplus of £2,000. He exports this amount, and invests it in foreign industries. When the dividends begin to come, say, £200 in value, what is he to do with the money?

He may find employment for some of the Unemployed and pay their wages with it.

He may invest it in a trade competing with the other Employer. If he captures some of that Employer's trade, he will throw some of that Employer's workmen on the streets.

He may take his dividend in the form of goods, which he wants to consume. If he does this, he will want less home-made goods. If he wants less home-made goods he will not need to employ so many workers. Result—more unemployed.

Thus the surplus capital of the rich made by the British workers and invested abroad may cause the unemployment of other British workers when the dividends come in.

Remember the quotation in the last chapter: "We are at present (after the boom in exports) in the position of investing capital abroad to a large extent."

Do you ever consider what this means? It means that *British workers are robbing their own countrymen of work.*

Foreign competition? We hear a good deal of foreign competition. But how much of this competition is the competition of British capital made by British workmen?

WE have invested abroad a capital of £2,000,000,000 or more.

That sum is about a sixth or seventh of the total wealth of the United Kingdom. It is finding work for Foreigners and Colonials, and the interest on it is a menace to the home trade.

Well, it is under the glorious system of Free Trade and Competition that this enormous sum has been sent abroad. OUR wealth is so great that WE can afford to invest £2,000,000,000 surplus capital abroad.

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Surplus capital! In a land where there are sometimes a million unemployed, and always twenty million very poor people.

Free Trade will not do, my countrymen. Under the present system an increase of trade cannot possibly abolish poverty or solve the problem of the unemployed.

Some one said to me: "Free Trade is, at any rate, better for the workers than Protection." Is it? Always and everywhere? *Must* it be?

Suppose it is better. How much better? Is the difference worth fighting and wrangling about for years?

I am told by Protectionists that wages are higher in America. On the other hand, Free Traders tell me that poverty and unemployment are as bad, or worse than here.

I know that I and hundreds of thousands are unemployed. I know that millions, the bulk of the population, in both countries are poor. Why should I waste time in arguing and fighting for one system or the other?

Both are bad.

Neither system is a remedy for poverty and unemployment. I say poverty and unemployment need not exist. Why should I waste time with these quack remedies?

Your food will cost you more!!

I am to bow down to the idol of cheapness. I, one of the unemployed. What is cheapness to me, who have no money at all?

The Free Traders tell me that under their glorious system of free exchange nations naturally occupy themselves in those industries which produce the most wealth.

Thus, if Great Britain, by employing a million men in growing corn, can produce £50,000,000 a year, while she can produce £51,000,000 by employing the men in getting coal, Great Britain will "naturally" employ those men in getting coal!

Sending her coal abroad, Great Britain can get £1,000,000 a year more wealth. What a beautiful

doctrine. Enormous increase in wealth. Foreigners can send us £51,000,000 of corn for our coal, while Great Britain could only grow £50,000,000. Free Trade for ever!

It never occurs to the Free Traders to ask: "Is it better to have a million men working in the bowels of the earth, or a million men tilling the surface?"

Free Traders say it is wicked to stop the free flow of wealth between nations.

Northampton bootmakers are making boots for 15s. a pair. Suddenly comes an American firm, and offers boots at 14s. 6d.

Away with the Northampton boots. Give us cheap American boots. British consumers will now save 6d. a pair on their boots. Glorious result of Free Trade—Northampton bootmakers are unemployed.

It never occurs to the Free Traders to ask if it is good that thousands of workers should lose their employment in order to save individuals a paltry sixpence apiece on a pair of boots.

There is more wealth in the country. Yes. But what about the unemployed bootmakers?

If, say the Free Traders, Northampton boots are driven out of the market by foreign boots, it proves that Northampton is not so well fitted as America for the production of boots. The Northampton bootmakers will lose their employment; but the cheap American boots will save the consumers a certain sum, which will flow into other trades, and the Northampton capitalists will find fresh openings for their capital, while the workers will transfer their services to some new employment.

It is a beautiful picture. But it isn't true.

When men are thrown out of work, by competition, or depression, or any cause, they do not so easily "transfer their services to some new employment."

It is easy to make them do so—on paper. And when they do get a fresh job, is it always as good as the one lost? Do they not often lose all their belongings, and get into debt, while looking for that new employment which the Free Traders talk about so glibly? And do not capitalists often lose a good

deal of capital before they give up the fight for the trade?

Nevertheless, say the Free Traders, WE, the nation, are richer under this system than we should be under Protection. By employing ourselves in those occupations in which we can produce the cheapest article, we earn the most wealth in money value.

In money value. They do not consider the twenty million very poor, the twelve million underfed, the hundreds of thousands of unemployed. The nation, WE, are richer. That is the test.

Well, my countrymen, I think it is a damnable doctrine, and its results are damnable.

Do not imagine that I object to the exchange of goods with foreign nations. Under proper conditions, the Free Trade doctrine might be true and good.

It may be true that more wealth is, or would be, produced under a system of free exchange between all peoples. But I ask: What do you mean by wealth?

When is a nation wealthy? Is our nation wealthy?

I will answer the last question first. Our nation is not wealthy. Our nation is a very poor nation, though our exports be the greatest per head of any country in the world.

We have a number of very rich people. Yes. But five million rich people do not make a nation of forty-three million people wealthy. There are thirty-eight million poor people in this country. Remember that.

The Free Traders boast of our wealth. Are twenty million very poor people, twelve million underfed, a million starving children, a million paupers, an infantile death-rate of 150 per 1,000—are these signs of wealth?

How many workers are there who have enough savings to keep them through six months' unemployment? Only a handful. Only a handful in this enormously wealthy country.

The question is not "Is the nation wealthy?" but "Are the people wealthy?" I want to know, not

what is the total wealth of the nation, but how many healthy, happy men and women and children there are?

Judged by this standard, how poor a nation is this, my countrymen!

The Free Traders tell us that we earn more wealth under Free Trade than WE should under Protection!

Again I ask: Who are WE?

Who gets the wealth?

Well, I have told you who gets it, and those facts prove that the system is useless as a remedy for unemployment and poverty. The system is, indeed, one of the chief causes of unemployment and poverty.

It is under the system of Free Trade that we have come to depend on foreign nations for our food supply. We bought £230,000,000 worth of food abroad last year.

To pay for those imports, we must export manufactured goods, and keep up our shipping.

Suppose we lost a lump of our export trade. Mr. Chamberlain says we are getting behind. That we are not advancing so rapidly in exports as other nations. Suppose the Japanese, Chinese, or Americans capture some of our markets.

Where should we get our food?

We should be in a nice hole then, WE, this great nation.

If we could not sell our exports, we could not buy imports of food. We are walking on thin ice, my countrymen.

And if competition became keener, what would the champions of Free Trade do to meet it?

They would say: "We must sell our manufactures, or you will get no food. To sell our manufactures we must reduce the price. To reduce the price we must reduce the cost of production. To reduce the cost of production we must CUT DOWN WAGES."

That would be, as always, the argument of the Free Traders.

The danger is there, my countrymen. It is always

there. Foreign competition is very alarming. Some day the wolf will really come.

Do you think it is a good system?

Does your moral law say it is right that men should be thrown on the streets to starve because other men in other countries produce goods 2½ per cent. cheaper? Do you think it wise for this nation to depend on foreigners for its food supply?

A pretty upshot to the greatest-wealth-under-free-exchange theory. What shall it profit a nation if it gain the whole world and lose its independence and the health and stamina of its people?

But, you will say, these are idle prophecies. We shall always hold our own, as we have done in the past.

Very well. Let us hold our own. Let us double our foreign trade. As I have proved, even that would not abolish poverty and solve the unemployed problem.

Free Traders talk about the folly of Protection. But Free Trade itself is a form of Protection. It protects the strong and the cunning against the weaker and the more honest. It protects the greedy against the just. It protects the cheap and nasty against the good. There is no health in it.

For sixty years we have tried this system. Before that we tried Protection. Under neither system have the people been happy and contented. Neither system has abolished poverty and unemployment.

Is it not time we found a new remedy, my countrymen?

THE ONLY REMEDY

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I cannot get work.

I have a right to work. The laws made by you, my countrymen, have robbed me of that right.

Can you deny my claim?

I believe that every honest man will admit that right. I believe that every honest man desires to see that right restored. I believe that every honest man will help to restore that right, once he understands how it can be done.

How can it be done?

I have shown, my countrymen, how unemployment is caused.

I have shown how, as all wealth comes from the land, the ownership of land and capital by a few people who are not compelled to find work for the masses, causes, and *must always* cause, unemployment.

I have shown how, being deprived of our natural right to the land, I and the millions like me, are forced to go to these few rich people to beg for the chance of earning a living.

I have shown how these few rich people refuse to employ anyone unless they can make a profit out of his labour.

I have shown how this dependence of the masses on landlords and employers causes competition for employment, thus lowering the rate of wages.

I have shown how competition for riches amongst these few privileged persons causes, and *must always* cause, unemployment.

I have shown how machinery and other improvements cause, and *must always* cause, unemployment.

I have shown that unemployment is caused by bad trade, and that bad trade is caused by the capitalists investing their money in industries where fresh capital is not needed, thus causing "over-production." Over-production is, and must be, followed by fierce competition, the closing down of works, and—unemployment.

I have shown how our small rich class export large amounts of surplus capital abroad, thus finding work for foreigners while their own countrymen starve.

I have shown how the rich are able to do these things because they take such an enormous and unfair share of the national income.

I have shown that the low wages and poverty of the workers prevent them from finding work for the unemployed.

I have shown that good trade and increased wealth are no remedy for unemployment. The unemployed in bad times are more numerous than ever.

I have shown that Charity is no remedy, and that Protection and Free Trade are quack remedies which have been long tried and have miserably failed to effect a cure.

Now, my countrymen, is there a remedy for all these evils? And if so, what is that remedy?

Mr. Chamberlain told us the other day that there were only two methods by which more employment for British workmen could be found. His plan, and *Socialism.*

Now, I have shown that Mr. Chamberlain's plan, as a remedy for unemployment, is a delusion and a snare.

I want the right to work. I don't want the right of a chance to get work. I have that now. Look at the United States under Protection.

I have no intention of wasting long years in helping to get Tariff Reform. I want the right to work. I am going for the right to work. And the only plan that will ensure my right to work is SOCIALISM.

Now, my countrymen, do not say "Impossible."

Socialism is not only possible, it is the only possible plan.

It is Socialism or destruction. This great nation, my countrymen, is going downhill. We cannot keep a front place, we cannot hold our position long, while one-third of us are underfed, starved in body and mind.

We may increase our home trade and our exports; but remember that, besides goods, we are exporting men and women, the best of our brain and brawn. We cannot retain our ancient vigour in a population born and bred in the slums of our great towns. We cannot advance in health and strength while a million little children go to school ill-fed and ill-clothed. We cannot breed a race of healthy mothers in our factories and workshops and sweateries. We cannot defend ourselves against external foes with armies of weaklings and epileptics.

But you know well our evil conditions. Have you any remedy? Do you know any other remedy than Socialism?

I do not, my countrymen. Mr. Chamberlain's plan is mere tinkering, and doubtful tinkering. If successful, the only result would be *some* more employment.

Now, who gains most from an increase in trade?

The rich. As I have shown, the idle landlords and capitalists take the bulk of the wealth.

Very well. These people are too rich now. If they get more, they must invest it at home or abroad.

If they invest it at home, it will cause unemployment, by competing with existing industries. If they invest it abroad, the interest on it will come in the form of imports, and displace British labour.

Mr. Chamberlain's plan is a botch. It cannot solve the unemployed problem, it cannot restore the right to work. But it can strengthen the power of the few rich over the many poor. It may, with all its promise of more employment, actually throw more workers into the streets.

I want the right to work. I have no time to waste

with quack remedies. While I am helping to bring about Tariff Reform, I am throwing away the opportunity to help forward Socialism, the only possible remedy for unemployment and poverty.

What would Socialism do?

Socialism would abolish the private ownership of land and capital. Tariff Reform does not touch that root evil of unemployment.

Under Socialism the land and capital would belong to all the people, just as the Crown lands, the arsenals, the Navy, the post offices, schools, gasworks, tramways, docks, waterworks, parks, and libraries belong to all the people.

Does not all wealth come from the land? It does.

Do the few landlords and employers who own the land and the capital which has been taken from the land admit any responsibility of finding work for all?

They do not.

Unemployment, then, *must* exist while a few people own the land and capital.

The landlords and capitalists to-day only find employment for people when it pleases them. It does not please them to find employment for all. Consequently there is a scramble for the work that is to be got.

Under Socialism there would be no scramble. The Government elected by all the people would *organise* the production of wealth. They would find work for all.

To-day this country is a poor country. Why? Because the few rich landlords and employers only allow the workers to produce wealth for their profit.

If a capitalist, by employing 1,000 people for a year in one way could make £50,000, and by employing 1,000 people for two years in some other way could make only £40,000 for himself, which would he do?

Would he consider his own profit, or the welfare of the 1,000 people?

He would go for that £50,000. What matter to

him if the 1,000 people starved during the second year? *He* is not held responsible.

Now, under Socialism this country would soon become a wealthy country. The land and capital would belong to all the people, and the Government would *organise* the production of wealth.

To-day the production of food, coal, clothing, furniture, all the necessaries and luxuries, is simply a wild, unorganised gamble for riches and mere existence.

Under Socialism, my countrymen, we should become a nation. To-day we are a mob, fighting each other for life.

Under Socialism we should really be a nation. To-day we only pretend to be a nation.

What is a nation? Is it not a number of people living together, working together, dying together if need be, bound together by ties of blood and belief and custom, and common interests of all kinds?

Are we a nation? Is it a nation where a few people force the masses to work for their profit, where the millions are compelled to scramble for the mean scraps left by the rich, where the rich "patriots" invest the wealth made by their own flesh and blood in foreign lands, while their own countrymen starve?

Competition and private ownership of land and capital must produce such conditions. But under Socalism wealth would be produced for use. The object of all the people would be to make *all the people* healthy and happy.

To live a healthy life man must have food, fuel, clothing, and shelter. To live a healthy, civilised life man must have food for the mind, he must have leisure and recreation.

Do the few owners of land and capital arrange for the production of these necessaries for all?

You know they do not. They arrange for nothing but their own profit.

But under Socialism, when all the land and capital belonged to the people, the business of the Government would be to organise the production of these necessaries.

Don't you think it would be more sensible than the present mad scramble?

Good heavens! We only need to exercise as much common sense as the proprietor of a coffee-stall.

If they want to feed 100,000 cup-tie spectators at the Crystal Palace, do they allow all kinds of caterers to dump down their foodstuffs in the grounds, or do they give the contract to one man, whose business it is to know what and how much food 100,000 people require?

If they did the first, what a howl would be raised. There would be too much of this food, too little of that, none at all of something else. There would be enormous loss and waste, and amidst the plenty many would be sent away hungry.

Now, it is just as easy to organise the production of food for forty millions as for a hundred thousand. Just as easy to organise the production of houses, coal, clothes, boots, and all other necessaries.

Is not the present state of things a shameful muddle? Is it not insane to say that unemployment is inevitable, when we have unemployed and poor agricultural labourers wanting clothes, and boots, and coal, and houses; unemployed colliers wanting food, and clothes, and houses; unemployed builders wanting clothes, and coal, and food; unemployed tailors wanting food, and houses, and coal?

What is the remedy?

Organisation, co-operation, national ownership. Socialism is the remedy.

Socalism would abolish competition for profits.

Under Socialism the people would not be so foolish as to allow two or two hundred men to be produce the goods required. The people would not open two draper's shops next door to each other. The people would not have two gas or electric plants where one would be enough.

Socialism would abolish waste.

Socialism would abolish competition amongst the workers.

Under Socialism the people would not be so foolish as to allow two or three hundred men to be running after one job. The people would find work for all.

Under Socialism there would be no starvation wages. We should be so wealthy that every worker would have a living wage. Much more wealthy than we are to-day.

Under Socialism new inventions would not throw workers on to the streets. Inventions are adopted because they increase wealth. Under Socialism the benefits would be spread over the whole country. If inventions displaced labour, other work would be found, or hours could be reduced.

Under Socialism an increase of wealth could not cause unemployment or starvation.

If the people made more wealth than they could consume they could either work shorter hours or export the surplus. They could loan it or give it away to poorer relations abroad or to foreigners.

Under Socialism foreign competition could not rob our workers of their employment. The people would not allow sweated goods to come into the country.

If the foreigners could produce goods made under proper conditions cheaper than we could, the people would decide whether they would exchange other goods for them or not. The whole nation would decide, not a few profit-hunters.

Under Socialism the rich could not cause unemployment by investing their surplus earnings in industry. The Government would control industry, and would not need to borrow capital from rich people. If any person had surplus capital the Government might take care of it for him, and charge him for the work. It would be a pleasant change.

Under Socialism Charity would be practically unnecessary. Every able, willing person would be able to earn his own living.

Under Socialism Free Trade and Protection could be considered on their merits, as they affect the

welfare of *all the people.* To-day these questions are of importance only to the landlords and employers.

Socialism is the remedy for all the evils named. Socialism is the *only* remedy.

The only remedy, my countrymen. When are you going to apply it?

FIRST AID FOR THE INJURED—TARIFF REFORM

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I cannot get work.

I have a right to work. The laws made by you, my countrymen, have robbed me of that right. You, then, can make laws which will restore that right.

How can it be done?

I showed in the last chapter that the only sure remedy for unemployment and poverty is Socialism. Socialism is the only remedy, my countrymen.

How is Socialism to be established?

"We may admit that Socialism is the only remedy," I am told, "but while we are waiting for Socialism men and women are starving. Trade depressions and unemployment come with the regularity of the tides. What is to be done now?"

Before answering that question let me say that Socialism will not come if we only *wait* for it. We must *work* for it.

What I want you to guard against is the danger of forgetting the cure while you are making the patient easier.

You may take a pill to carry you through the day's work, but unless you adopt the proper remedy later, your ill-health will remain, perhaps intensified by the effects of the temporary remedy.

Socialism will effect a lasting cure.

Socialism, I know, cannot be established in a week. But Socialism will be established all the sooner if your faith in its efficacy, its possibility, and its justice is buttressed by a determination to get it at all hazards.

Do not be led aside by quack remedies. I am afraid, my countrymen, that many of you imagine a vain thing. Your hearts are touched by the miseries of the poor and the unemployed, and you are in favour of doing "something."

Something. But not much. Not *too* much. If. somehow, the poor could have another 5 per cent. added to their wages, if the unemployed in bad times could be fed and kept alive, you would sleep sound at nights, and all would be better than well.

So we have schemes for Tariff Reform and schemes for finding work and wages for the unemployed, which are to cost the taxpayers *nothing!*

My countrymen, these are quack remedies. The thousands like me will not much longer consent to be herded and driven like dumb beasts.

Labour is awake. Our claim is not now for "work" only, but for life. We do not *live* to-day. We want the right to live. We claim the right to work, because man cannot live without working, begging, or stealing. And when I say the right to work, I do not mean the right to dishonourable toil for a mean wage, but the right to honourable work for a decent and honourable livelihood. And Socialism is the only remedy.

Your Unemployed Act will not do. Charity will not do. Mr. Chamberlain's plan will not do. These are the shifts of people who want to retain the present unjust condition of society. We must have Socialism. *All of it.*

If you want to know how Socialism is to be established, read *Britain for the British.*

You all know what municipal Socialism is. What we have done with the gas, and the trams, and the water, and the electricity of our big cities, that we can do with other industries.

Read *Mind Your Own Business*, and learn how municipal Socialism pays the community, and then figure out how an extension of the principle would add to the health and wealth of the *whole people.*

Socialism cannot be established in a week. True.

But it might be established in a fortnight if—if there were enough Socialists.

Meanwhile, what is to be done, my countrymen?

I am one of the unemployed. I want food. I am willing to work. What can be done now to prevent starvation and the degradation that follows idleness and poverty?

First, I want you to keep in mind the principle which should guide you in adopting measures of relief for the unemployed.

All schemes for helping the unemployed should be steps in the direction of Socialism.

Tried by this test, how does Mr. Chamberlain's plan stand?

I am told that as palliatives must be adopted while we are waiting for Socialism, I ought to support Mr. Chamberlain's plan, because it would *certainly* provide more employment.

Would it? I do not think that is proved. I doubt it. I think it possible that his plan would cause less employment.

We have to look to the future. Mr. Chamberlain starts with a low tariff, but how long would the tariff remain low? Whatever Mr. Chamberlain means, his Party means Protection.

Now, Protection, without Socialism, might be more deadly to the workers than the present system.

Protection means Trusts. We have a few Trusts now. But with foreign competition scotched, Trusts would multiply here as they have done in America.

Trusts save labour. Trusts abolish competition. Trusts fleece the consumers. Trusts mean riches for the few.

Just as to-day the few rich would make profits for themselves, and just as to-day they would export *their* surplus capital to foreign countries, and the British unemployed might go hang.

I am told that our rich people export their capital abroad because in foreign protected countries they are sure of a market, and so can rely on making profits, and that if our industries were protected against foreign competition in the same way, our

rich people would rather invest their capital at home, and so find work for British labour.

But the bulk of the £2,000,000,000 invested abroad by our rich people, is invested in Foreign and Colonial Government loans, municipal loans, railways, lands, and mines, the safest forms of investment that can be found, not in competitive industries.

Anyhow, there is not the slightest hope that Mr. Chamberlain's plan would induce the rich to invest their surplus capital at home in preference to sending it abroad.

And, as I have shown, if they did invest it at home, they would have to invest it in industries where capital is not needed—so causing over-production, followed by unemployment. Or the wages of the workers would have to be considerably raised so that they could buy the increased production of goods.

Does Mr. Chamberlain's plan provide for this increase of workers' wages? Does it provide for the organisation of industry, so that over-production in any branch would be avoided?

No. It provides practically for nothing but the protection of the profits of the landlord and employer.

Look at the United States. They have high Protection. And they have Trusts, a few rich people, and a mass of poor and unemployed.

Mr. R. Hunter, in his book, "Poverty," says of the United States:

"There are probably in fairly prosperous years no less than 10,000,000 persons in poverty—that is to say, underfed, underclothed, and poorly housed. Of these, about 4,000,000 persons are public paupers. Over 2,000,000 working men are unemployed from four to six months of the year. About 500,000 male immigrants arrive yearly and seek work in the very districts where unemployment is greatest. Nearly half of the families in the country are forced to become wage-earners when they should still be in school. Abour 5,000,000 women find it necessary to work, and about 2,000,000 are employed in factories,

mills, etc. Probably no less than 1,000,000 workers are injured or killed each year while doing their work, and about 10,000,000 of the persons now living will, if the present ratio is kept up, die of the preventable disease, tuberculosis."

If Protection does not cause unemployment, why does this state of things exist in the United States? Why do not the millionaires find work for the unemployed?

The American rich, like ours, are investing abroad, and, according to Mr. John D. Rockefeller, the Oil King, there will be in two years from now a terrible depression in trade, causing the unemployment of ten million men.

Why? Because, says Mr. Rockefeller, the productive capacity of the United States is vastly in excess of the people's power of consumption!

Thus, under high Protection, exactly the same poverty, unemployment, and pauperdom exist as under Free Trade.

The people of the United States are to starve because they can produce more wealth than they can use!

Why can't they use it? Because the few rich won't let them.

Protection, then, without Socialism, is worthless; and that is what Mr. Chamberlain's plan would give us.

It will not do, my countrymen. How can you be deluded by such manifest quackery?

Mr. Chamberlain's plan is a botch. It does not touch the root evils. It does not touch the private ownership of land and capital. It does not touch the question of the unfair distribution of wealth. It does not touch the question of the "unearned" rent and interest now paid to the idle landlord and shareholder. It does not admit the right to work.

Therefore, I say, Mr. Chamberlain's plan is not a palliative which ought to receive the support of any person who is honestly desirous of finding a remedy for unemployment and poverty.

It may take years to accomplish Mr. Chamberlain's plan, and then you are only laying the foundation for Protection. Why should I waste my time in helping Mr. Chamberlain?

I do not say that Tariff Reform with proper safeguards might not prove a useful palliative.

All I say is that Mr. Chamberlain and those of the men who support him are not to be trusted. They do not mean Socialism.

Tariff Reform might be made a step towards Socialism. We might, for instance, take off the taxes of £30,000,000 on the food and tobacco of the people, and get the revenue by taxing the luxuries of the rich.

A Socialist Government might find it necessary to put a high tariff on foreign goods made by sweated labour, so that British workers would not be displaced. But Mr. Chamberlain is not a Socialist. His Government will not be a Socialist Government. His plan would protect only the rich.

The Tariff Reformers can only be prevented from working injury to the country by sending Socialists to Parliament. Then, if Tariff Reform becomes a question of immediate action, the Socialists will be strong enough to see that the evils of Protection are counterbalanced by measures for the protection of the workers.

If Tariff Reform comes, it must be made a step towards Socialism.

So I say again, do not be induced to expend all your energies in fighting for Mr. Chamberlain's plan. Fight for Socialism. Socialism is greater than Tariff Reform. Tariff Reform is only a tool. We do not want to sharpen the tool for the rich. Get Socialists into Parliament, and we can use the tool to raise ourselves.

Get Tariff Reformers into Parliament, and they will use the tool to keep us under.

To you also, my Free Trade friends, I would utter a similar warning.

Do not be led away by Free Trade claptrap. Free Trade might be a glorious thing under proper

conditions. It is not a glorious thing for me, and for millions like me to-day.

Do you not see that this fiscal fight is a fight between capitalists as to who shall make the profits? It isn't a fight for the benefit of the "nation." That is what they tell *you*.

The capitalist who loses his trade through foreign competition is a Tariff Reformer. He wants Protection.

The capitalist who depends on cheap foreign imports for raw material is a Free Trader. He doesn't want his prices raised.

The exporter doesn't want food taxed, because he might have to pay higher wages, so increasing his cost of production. Consequently he is a Free Trader. And so on.

Lancashire went solid for Free Trade. Cotton is an export trade depending on free imports for cheap raw material.

Lancashire is prosperous just now. But Lancashire may not always be prosperous. There are Japan, India, America, and China in the offing. If they cut into Lancashire trade abroad and at home, we should find Lancashire squealing for Tariff Reform.

But, my Lancashire friends, why should you depend on foreign countries to dispose of the bulk of your cotton goods?

If the production of goods were organised, as Socialism would organise it, you could find employment in making cotton goods for your own countrymen.

This would be *certain* employment, not as to-day, depending on your success in beating foreign competitors. There would be no short time, no starvation, no strikes and lock-outs.

We have millions of bare backs, millions of people who want cotton goods at home, and this glorious system of Free Trade ordains that you should send £70,000,000 worth of cotton goods a year to foreign countries, while the home trade only takes £20,000,000 worth! Isn't it insane?

I ask you, too, to look at this question, not as a cotton operative, but as a citizen of the United Kingdom.

Tariff Reform would, you think, hurt you. Well, Free Trade hurts your brother workmen. What are you going to do about it?

Under Free Trade a certain number of workmen in certain trades get fairly regular employment. Under Protection another class of workmen would get fairly regular employment.

But under Socialism *all workmen would have regular employment always.*

So I say to you, my Free Trade friends, if you want to do the best for your country, and for yourselves and your children, you will not be content to fight for Free Trade against Tariff Reform. You will fight for Socialism. For Socialism is the only remedy for poverty and unemployment. Read *Britain for the British.*

Tell me, what are you going to do if the Tariff Reformers win the day and the prices of your food and other goods are raised? Or if your foreign competitors capture some more of your trade?

The employers will say, "We must reduce wages to meet competition." What will you say?

The Socialist can tell you what to say. Read *Britain for the British.* If we must keep our foreign trade, if the cost of production must be reduced, why should you not cut down the rents and profits of the landowner and idle shareholder? Why should you not tax royalty owners and stop the shipping rings and the railway companies from fleecing you?

That is the Socialists' way out of the dilemma. If, while we are waiting and working for Socialism, we must keep up our export trade, we can best keep it up by cheapening the cost of production. And we can best cheapen the cost of production by throwing off the burden of taxation levied by the idle landlord, the idle shareholder, and the idle royalty owner.

Send Socialists to Parliament, and they will pass

measures to effect these reforms. Send Free Traders to Parliament, and they will do nothing to alter the present conditions.

Free Trade? Tariff Reform? Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Neither is any good. Socialism is the only remedy.

Meanwhile, something must be done to help the unemployed.

HIGHER WAGES

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am able to work. I am willing to work. I cannot get work.

You, my countrymen, are, I hope, convinced that I have a right to work, and you are convinced, I also hope, that Socialism is the only remedy for unemployment. But, while we are establishing Socialism, what must be done to help the unemployed?

I think you will agree that it is unjust and cruel to allow the unemployed and their wives and children to starve in the richest country in the world.

Remember, the unemployed are unemployed through no fault of their own. It is you, my countrymen, your laws and your system of society, which cause unemployment. Or, rather, we are *all* responsible.

Should the few unemployed be punished for the mistakes of the whole people? Surely not.

I am asked why I have not dealt with drink as the cause of unemployment.

Drink is not the cause of unemployment. The drunkard is dismissed and the sober man is chosen; but how comes it that there is a sober man ready to take the drunkard's place? Read *Britain for the British.*

If you understand the working of the system of competition, and the monopoly of land and capital by the few, you will see that unemployment *must* be caused, even if alcohol were banished from the country.

As the unemployed are suffering through the action of the nation, I contend that it is the duty of the nation to relieve them.

Starvation, and the evils that come through lack of wages, must be prevented.

Whether the unemployed can or cannot get work, they must not be allowed to starve.

The nation can afford to pay wages to the unemployed and keep them in idleness. What would it cost to pay 30s. a week to every one of them?

Taking an average for ten years, there are about 400,000 unemployed.

To pay 400,000 people 30s. a week for a year would take over £30,000,000.

Thirty million pounds! For an average of thirty million pounds a year we could prevent the misery and degradation now suffered by over a million people!

Would it not be a cheap line, my countrymen?

But where are the £30,000,000 to come from?

Turn to the chapter on "Rich and Poor." You will there find that 250,000 persons take £585,000,000 out of the total national income of £1,710,000,000.

Those 250,000 persons are getting too much, my countrymen. Those are the people who are able to send capital abroad to find work for foreigners. We must dam that stream, and divert the capital into home channels.

Thirty million pounds! They would never notice it had gone. It would be no more felt by them than your spending a penny.

Now, I am not suggesting that we should pay the unemployed 30s. a week for doing nothing. I am only pointing out that it is our duty to keep the unemployed, and that we have sufficient wealth to keep them.

If you reject Socialism, and decide that the present system is the best possible, even then I contend that your moral law commands you to treat the unemployed justly.

If you think it good to retain a system which does and must cause, *always*, more or less unemployment, then I contend it is your duty to provide a living for those unemployed.

The unemployed are as necessary a part of your system as the employed. Then pay them.

Just think. You could not have booms in trade unless there were the unemployed waiting to be called up when wanted. The unemployed are as necessary as the employed.

One year the unemployed are 10 per cent, of the workers. Trade revives. The unemployed fall to 2 per cent. But how could trade revive if there were no unemployed?

In your cricket and football clubs you pay all the professionals engaged, whether they play in matches or not. The Army and Navy are paid in time of peace as in time of war. Why should not the industrial army be on the same footing?

You cannot deny the obligation. Your laws prevent the unemployed from working. It is your duty to keep them.

The question is: What work can be found to employ them? To keep them in idleness would be outrageous. Our gorge rises at the sight of an idle man—unless he be rich.

Well, my countrymen, to find work is a very easy task.

You might pay the unemployed 30s. a week, and to salve your conscience, you might employ them in digging holes, and in filling the holes up again.

That would be *work*.

And—I say it in all seriousness—that method would, perhaps, be the sanest method to adopt, if you are determined to retain the present system of private ownership of land and capital, competition, and Free Trade.

Because if you set the unemployed doing useful, productive work, and the rich continue to take the bulk of the new wealth produced, the old evils remain.

The surplus wealth taken by the rich would be invested in home trade. There would be overproduction and more unemployment. Or they would invest it abroad, and the dividends, coming in the form of foreign goods, would

compete with home-made goods, and displace British labour.

Now, in digging and filling up holes the unemployed would not produce wealth. The rich would not benefit. The least possible harm would be done.

But what a spectacle for the world we should present. The most civilised and intelligent nation on earth compelled to doom half a million or a million of its population to dig holes and fill them up again. We should die of shame.

That way, my countrymen, is madness. The only remedy for unemployment is Socialism, and the only sane palliatives are steps towards Socialism.

Now, the first palliative I shall suggest is a *general rise of wages for what are called the working classes.*

The average working-class income is little more than £1 a week. If, then, this class had an increase of wages, the immediate effect would be a demand for those goods known as necessaries.

More food would be called for, more and better houses, more boots, more clothes, more furniture, more coal, more books, more pictures, more of everything necessary to a healthy and decent livelihood.

The workers in these industries would be fully employed, and many of the unemployed would be absorbed. The bigger the increase of wages (within limits) the more employment there would be.

If a nation is continually increasing its wealth, as we are, the people must have higher wages, in order to buy, and use, and consume that wealth. Why *should* we allow a few people to waste heaps of it, and export other heaps of it to foreign countries?

Now, an increase of wages may be obtained in more than one way.

I may get 5s. a week more, or I may pay 5s. a week less for the goods I purchase.

Take the first method. How are the workers to get an increase of money wages?

By their own sectional efforts and by legislation.

The people, through Parliament, ought to at once prohibit sweating. A national minimum living wage should be fixed by Parliament, and no

employer should be allowed to employ any person at less than the fixed minimum living wage.

All Government and municipal employees should receive not less than a fixed minimum wage.

My countrymen, you cannot *afford* to pay a living wage! You, who live on the profits and dividends made by these sweated slaves! Nonsense. You cannot afford to pay *less*.

Then the workers, through their trade unions, should insist on having a larger share of the product of their labour.

Consider the case of the miners. Isn't it monstrous that a few thousand landowners and shareholders should take nearly as much as the 900,000 men who do the work?

In 1902-3 the royalty owners and shareholders took as their share of the produce £40,000,000. The 900,000 workers at £50 a year each, took only £45,000,000!

Another badly-paid class is the railway workers. The idle shareholders actually take more than the half-million railway servants! While the shareholders take £40,000,000 in profits, the workers receive less than £30,000,000, an average of 25s. a week.

Such an unfair distribution of wealth screams for re-adjustment. The workers, not less than the shareholders, are responsible for this state of things.

Do you know, my fellow-workers, that your apathy, your content in the condition to which "Providence" has called you, is the cause of the unemployment, the misery and starvation of thousands of your countrymen?

You are *content* with your paltry 25s. a week! You are *content* to live in a jerry-built, bathless horror called a house, for which you pay famine prices. You are *content* to live with gimcrack loathsome furniture. You are *content* to eat and drink adulterated concoctions misnamed food. You are *content* to wear cheap and nasty clothing. You are *content* to ride, packed like garbage, in filthy railway carriages. You are *content* to be bundled

and squeezed into places of "amusement," *content* if you can only get a glimpse of the well-dressed, spacious few whose seats are bought with *your* wealth. You are *content* to let your wives sacrifice their womanliness in a life of monotonous toil and meanness, trying to make both ends meet, because you are afraid of your employers. You are *content* to see your children ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-educated —nay, you are content to live on their earnings, some of you. You are *content* if you are graciously permitted to work till you are fifty. You are *content* to sponge in your old age on your friends, and to drag out the remnants of a miserable existence in disgraceful poverty. And you—*you* won't hear of Chinese slavery!

Content? I say such content is criminal. It is your content that makes me one of the unemployed. Is it not time you began to have a little self-respect, my friends? Is it not time you cultivated a little *dis*content? Divine *dis*content.

Now to the second method of raising wages. At the present time the working classes pay rates and taxes.

I would abolish all food taxes and tobacco taxes, etc., paid by the working classes.

I would also reduce the rates on all houses of less rent than £20 a year.

I would establish old-age pensions.

The deficit in the revenue required by the national and local authorities could be obtained from a revised Income Tax, graduated so as to fall heavily on the few big incomes, and by increasing the Death Duties.

Remember, a mere handful of rich people take £585,000,000 a year. A few thousand rich people die every year, and leave behind them £200,000,000. That quarry is hardly touched yet.

I would establish an eight-hour day. This would absorb thousands of the unemployed. To-day millions are working overtime, while hundreds of thousands are unemployed.

If you had the right men in Parliament, these

measures could easily be passed in one session. They would transfer smoothly, and without injustice to any, a respectable sum from the pockets of the rich to the pockets of the poor. They would cause an increase of employment, and they would result in raising the standard of life of millions who now are on the verge of starvation.

These measures satisfy the principle laid down for our guidance. They would be steps in the direction of Socialism, because they would be steps in the direction of justice.

But they would not solve the unemployed problem, and they would not be Socialism. The system of Private Ownership and Competition would still produce its periodical trade depressions. The cry of the unemployed would still be heard in the land, and for them some provision must be made.

STEPS TO SOCIALISM

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work I am able to work. I am willing to work. I cannot get work.

The measures I have suggested would tend to relieve the pressure of unemployment. But they would not prevent unemployment entirely, and they would not abolish poverty.

The measures would result in a slightly fairer distribution of the national income. They would also divert industry into more productive channels.

I am told that if we reduce the incomes of the rich, they will not be able to " find employment " for so many people.

If we reduce the incomes of the rich, they will discharge their flunkeys, grooms, motormen, cooks, manicurists, tailors, dressmakers, wine merchants, singers, actors, artists, palmists, and other producers of " luxuries."

But have I not shown that the rich have *more* than enough to satisfy all their luxurious desires? They cannot spend all their wealth. They satisfy all their cravings for luxury, and *then* they have a surplus to invest.

The investment of their surplus capital is one of the causes of unemployment. Therefore if we can divert some of it into the pockets of the poor, unemployment will be to some extent prevented.

The poor will not invest it. They will spend it in necessaries. Things they want to consume.

Leave a surplus million in the hands of a rich man and he will invest it, at home or abroad. If at home, it will cause unemployment (unless in a *new* industry). If abroad, it does the poor no good.

Give that million to the poor and they will spend it in food, clothes, furniture, coal, and houses, thus finding employment for themselves.

Again, suppose the proposed taxes did cut into the spending income of the rich, and they were compelled to dismiss their flunkeys, grooms, motormen, manicurists, palmists, cooks, needless tailors, dressmakers, decorators, florists, jewellers, and what not, would that be a terrible evil?

These people would be unemployed. No doubt. But other people would be employed by the poor whose incomes were raised by the taxes and the other measures.

Moreover, the latter would be producing wealth, not consuming only. Those employed by the poor would produce food, clothes, furniture, houses, etc., for *use*. Many of the people employed by the rich produce *nothing at all*, not even useless ornaments.

But these useless hangers-on of the rich *consume*. How do they live? They don't grow food. They eat food. They don't make boots. They wear boots. They don't build houses. They live in houses. They don't dig coal. They burn coal. How do they get these things?

Why, the workers at these industries produce them! It is they who keep the hangers-on of the rich, just as they keep the rich.

Are we to stay our reforming hands because the grooms and flunkeys may lose their employment for a time?

I think not, my countrymen. They have the right to work, as I have. But they have not the right to live on the producers of wealth.

If a redistribution of the national income causes a glut of grooms and flunkeys, something must be done for them. I have said that the proposed palliatives will not solve the unemployed problem, and this objection to reform because the rich would not be able to "find employment" for a lot of useless, unproductive parasites emphasises my contention that Socialism—that is, organisation of industry—is the only remedy.

We must keep the remedy in view all the time. We must have Socialism. *All of it.*

In the meantime, what are we to do for the victims of our chaotic competitive system?

To begin with, we must admit the Right to Work.

We must admit the right of every citizen to employment by the State or the Municipality.

The Right, my countrymen. You have to get out of your heads the idea that for a man to be out of work is a disgraceful condition, deserving the punishment of starvation, the loss of home, the torture of wife and children, and the contempt of all persons who have the luck to be in work.

The unemployed are the victims of your bad system. You, my countrymen, and your ancestors made that system. Is it not so?

Admitting the Right to Work, it will be our duty to find work and wages.

To provide work is an easy matter, but we must be careful to guard against quack remedies which will cause new unemployment.

We cannot set the unemployed producing goods which would compete with other industries.

For instance, we could not to-day set unemployed bootmakers making boots to be sold on the market.

The market is already overstocked, and those employed are capable of meeting even a heavier demand.

We cannot start municipal work in December which in the ordinary course would be done in May. The result would simply be to rob one set of workers to find work for another set.

We cannot allow benevolent people to collect funds from all classes and start wood-chopping or other industries to compete with existing trades.

What, then, can we do?

We must find work for the unemployed which would not otherwise be done. We must not imitate the thoughtless rich, and invest our funds in industries where more capital is not needed. We must start *new* industries.

For instance, there is re-afforestation, about which

we have heard so much. The experts tell us that trees could be planted on several million acres of waste land in the United Kingdom. This industry would find employment for thousands of men, and would in time return a handsome profit to the nation.

How is the capital to be found to start it?

By taxing the big incomes, by raising the Death Duties, and by loans.

If you tax the masses, you will reduce their spending power, and so reduce employment. But if you tax the big incomes, you tap the surplus capital which is used for investment.

The Government could turn this capital into channels useful and profitable to the *nation*. In the hands of the rich it is injurious both to themselves and the community.

There are other national works which could be undertaken in the same way. Reclamation of foreshores, new roads, sea walls, improvement of the canal system, etc.

Then there is the housing problem. Most of the working-class houses in the Kingdom ought to be demolished and rebuilt. Isn't it disgraceful that there should be thousands and thousands of builders out of work to-day?

The municipalities should be empowered, and compelled where necessary, to bring up the dwellings of the people to a high standard of health and convenience.

Money? My countrymen, money? It is not money which builds houses, it is labour. The lords of money will not allow us to use our labour without their permission. Very well. Tax the rich and borrow their money for the time being. If they won't come up to the scratch—well, we shall find another way.

There is municipal work of other kinds which might be put in hand to find work for the unemployed. In the cleaning, painting, and repairing of public property there is ample scope.

The laying out of new streets and parks, under

the housing schemes, would also absorb many of the unemployed.

There is the land. Along with the re-housing of the people there should be made an attempt to keep the rural population on the land, and induce some of the town dwellers to go back to the land.

Municipalities should be empowered to purchase compulsorily land for small holdings, and for municipal farms.

Farm colonies, too, may be useful institutions for restoring habits of industry, and renewing the health of some of the unfortunate victims of our system, but we must not dream of attempting to restore our agriculture, and abolish unemployment, merely by dumping the unemployed on derelict land during times of depression.

Farm colonies for the unemployed are all very well in their way, but they do not go a long way. They should be used as one of the means of dealing with the unemployed, not as the only means.

Some people talk as if emigration would solve the problem. Emigration? What have we to do with emigration? There is enough land in this country to feed three times the population. Let those who want to emigrate—emigrate. But we must set our faces against the adoption of emigration as a remedy for the unemployed problem.

Let us see, now, how far these palliatives would carry us.

First, there are the measures for increasing the wages of the poor, and for reducing the hours of labour:

(*a*) Reform of taxation.
(*b*) Legal minimum wage.
(*c*) Raising trade union standard.
(*d*) Old age pensions.

Second, there is the establishment of national industries:

(*a*) Housing schemes.
(*b*) Land settlement schemes.
(*c*) Re-afforestation, new roads, canals, foreshores, etc.

These industries ought to be started, remember, not only because there is an unemployed problem, but because they are urgently needed for the national welfare.

Third, there are municipal undertakings, some local, and some branches of national undertakings:

(*a*) General sanitary work.

(*b*) Housing schemes, parks, laying out new districts, etc.

All these measures would be steps to Socialism. When we had got them into working order we should find ourselves compelled to continue our march. We should be driven by the logic of circumstances to introduce more and more Socialistic methods, because only by such methods can we root out unemployment, and get the best out of ourselves and our country.

Organisation. That is the remedy. National railways, national mines, national banks, national insurance, national land, municipal bread, milk, boots, clothes, and houses. Production of wealth for the use of the whole people, *not* for the profit of a few. The leave-things-alone policy has proved a dismal failure. We must have organisation, Socialism.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

I AM one of the unemployed. I want work. I am able to work. I am willing to work. I cannot get work.

Starting with this text, I have tried to show you, my countrymen, that the unemployed is not a wastrel, a loafer, a shirker, or a fool. To disprove the common opinion that being out of work is a proof of incompetence or laziness, I have put before you an examination of our present system of getting a living, which shows, however incorrect in details it may be, that it is impossible under that system for every willing worker to obtain work. By fact and argument I claim to have proved that unemployment *must* happen so long as that system exists.

If my facts are correct, and if my arguments are sound, many of you, my countrymen, must be constrained to alter your views on these two important questions. You must cease to look with a scornful eye on the Unemployed. You must cease to curl your lip and sniff with self-righteous satisfaction as you turn on a contemptuous heel and tell him who begs for a copper that he could find work if he looked for it. If my facts are correct, and if my arguments are sound, your faith in our glorious system of Private Ownership of Land and Capital, Competition, and Free Trade will have received a rude shock. For my facts and arguments prove that the unemployed is out of work through no fault of

his own, and my facts and arguments show that your much-vaunted system is the cause of that unemployment.

Have I convinced you?

I sincerely hope so. If I have, what follows? First, your attitude to the unemployed problem must be radically altered. If you are convinced of the justice of my case, you will naturally desire to do something for the victims of our ruthless system. No man can consider unmoved the terrible misery now suffered year in and year out by thousands of his fellow-countrymen, their wives and children. No man who loves his country, who is proud of her traditions and achievements, but must be troubled by the spectacle of the gaunt and ragged regiments whose cry for work echoes perennially through the land, now falling to a smothered murmur of discontent, now rising to a strident scream of pain and hunger and hatred. These are not signs of greatness and prosperity, my countrymen.

As a man, as a patriot, as a citizen, you, I have no fear, will be anxious to find a remedy for this terrible condition of things. What is that remedy to be?

Convinced that the unemployed has a right to work, your problem is to find work. All the remedies you have so far tried have been failures. What are you going to try next? All the remedies you have tried before have been failures. But why have they been failures? Because you did not know the root cause of the disease. Now that you understand these things it should be impossible for you to dream of tinkering any more with Free Trade, Tariff Reform, new markets, increased trade, emigration, or charity. These are quack remedies. What are you going to try next?

Well, my countrymen, I have suggested a remedy —Socialism. Socialism, I think, is the only remedy. Men call us dreamers when we say that. You, then, are awake? And what is it you wakeful people see? What is it you do? What is it you have done? Why, this—you have done this: You have built up

a system which condemns the bulk of the population in a rich country to be for ever poor. You have built up a system which condemns a third of the people to live on the verge of starvation. You have built up a system which condemns 400,000 persons to be permanently unemployed. You have built up a system which condemns women to work at arduous, degrading tasks. You have built up a system which allows men to make profits out of the labour of little children. You have built up a system which slaughters the workers needlessly by thousands in order to keep up the rich man's per cent. You have built up a system which honours greed and cunning before love and co-operation. You have built up a system which has turned putrid, a system which is rotting the nation's heart and brain and soul. That is what you practical, wakeful people have done. Is it not so?

You are beginning, I think, to realise how bad that system is. What are you going to do? A remedy must be found. Is there any other remedy but Socialism? Is there anything that will relieve us but steps towards Socialism? If so, the plan has yet to be produced. There is no other remedy in the field, and that being so, I ask you, my countrymen, to consider the case for Socialism with all the care and attention such a serious question deserves. The issue is life or death.

The problem before us is to find work for the unemployed. But, if you have understood the arguments and facts I have put before you, it will be clear that the best way to find work is to prevent unemployment, and the way to prevent unemployment is to take steps to Socialism.

I have mentioned some items on the Socialist programme, and all these involve taxation of the rich. Do you say robbery, confiscation, spoliation? It is nothing of the kind. I might ask, what of to-day? Who is being despoiled to-day? Why am I one of the unemployed?

All the Socialists propose to do is to make new arrangements. On and after a certain date you, Plutus, Esq., shall employ no man unless you pay

him at least so much. To insist on direct payment in the form of wages would cause disorganisation. It would be simpler to tax your income and return certain sums to the workers by reducing their taxes. Is that spoliation? Not at all.

No Socialist has suggested that the rich and mighty shall be pulled down from their seats, and that the poor should take their places, and be exalted to the same bad eminence. That is not Socialism. Socialism is a system under which honours and rewards would be distributed according to the value of a worker's services to the commonwealth. Is that an unjust principle? Are the practices of to-day fairer? Is not the Socialist principle more in accord with your moral law, the golden rule?

When I hear that word spoliation I wonder if it is we who are asleep, or those who cry thus? Spoliation? My friends, my poor blind friends. Look, look at your country, *and* your countrymen.

Socialism is the only remedy. Be convinced of that, and you will laugh at the difficulties in the way. But do not be deluded into thinking that you will try a bit of it, and then stop. That is the old quack way. Steps, my countrymen, not sops. Labour is awake. But Labour must not kick and go to sleep again. Labour must keep awake. Does it startle you, my wakeful friend, to learn that your modesty, your content, your dislike to make a row about it are actually causing the starvation of thousands of your fellow would-be workers? That is the terrible fact. Are you going to sleep again? I trust not, and if you keep awake the only thing you can do to help your unfortunate brothers is to take steps to Socialism. And does it not startle you, my rich friends, to learn that your wealth, which you invest to make more wealth, is also the cause of unemployment and misery and starvation? Are you, too, going to remain content? Is it nothing to you, this terrible suffering? Is the British Empire nothing to you? Is manhood nothing to you? Ah! You are afraid of Socialism. But are you sure that fear is not the echo of your own reproving conscience?

You fear the greed and tyranny of the down-trodden if they should awake and use their power? Is it not so? Tell me, does not that show that too much riches is an evil thing? For the poor and down-trodden have not yet exhibited those characteristics of tyranny and greed. Why not? Because they are bred largely by riches. But under Socialism there would be no temptations of this kind. All would be fed and clothed and housed. All would have leisure and pleasure. Socialism is not only the best system for the production of material things. It is the only system for producing a nation of *men* and *women*—and *men* and *women*, my rich friends, do not desire to become rich at the cost of their fellows' misery.

Socialism is the only remedy. But it would take such a long time to establish! A long time? Nay, it is your wakeful people whose remedies take such a long time. Why, you would waste ten years talking about a penny rate to relieve the unemployed. And you complain of Socialism taking a long time.

Give *us* ten years. Give us ten years hard, and we will put such a different face on this dear old country as will make the very coal measures turn in their beds. Give us ten years and we will abolish starvation out of the land. Give us ten years, and we will lift the dread of poverty from millions of over-burdened men and women. Give us ten years, and you shall not be hurt by the sight of one pinched childish face in all your 20,000 schools. Give us ten years, and we will show you hundreds of thousands of happy mothers joying in the presence of children who had else been gorging your ravenous graveyards. Give us ten years, and you shall not find one willing worker without a job. Give us ten years, give us twenty years, give us a generation, and we will produce to specification one Merrie England, with more full-breathed, happy-hearted men and women to the square mile than any other country on earth. A long time! *Us?* Do but give us a chance, and you will live to blush out your old age

for shame that you refused for "such a long time" to listen to those dreamers, the Socialists.

* * *

I am one of the unemployed. I want work. I am willing to work. I am able to work. I cannot find work.

I want work. I demand work—and wages.

Can you deny the justice of my claim?

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